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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION

NATIONAL TPS ALLIANCE, MARIELA
GONZÁLEZ, FREDDY JOSE ARAPE RIVAS,
M.H., CECILIA DANIELA GONZÁLEZ
HERRERA, ALBA CECILIA PURICA
HERNÁNDEZ, E.R., HENDRINA VIVAS
CASTILLO, A.C.A., SHERIKA BLANC, VILES
DORSAINVIL, and G.S.,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

KRISTI NOEM, in her official capacity as
Secretary of Homeland Security, UNITED
STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND
SECURITY, and UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA,

Defendants.

Case No. 3:25-cv-01766-EMC

**DECLARATION OF JESSICA KARP
BANSAL IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS'
OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANTS' CROSS-
MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT
AND REPLY TO DEFENDANTS'
OPPOSITION TO PLAINTIFFS' MOTION
FOR PARTIAL SUMMARY JUDGMENT**

Date: August 1, 2025

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Place: Courtroom 5, 17th Floor

1 Additional Counsel for Plaintiffs

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DECLARATION OF JESSICA KARP BANSAL

I, Jessica Karp Bansal, declare as follows:

1. I am an attorney at law duly licensed and entitled to practice in the State of California. I am an attorney with the National Day Laborer Organizing Network and counsel of record in this action for Plaintiffs. I have personal knowledge of the facts set forth in this declaration and, if called as a witness, I could and would testify competently thereto.

2. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 1** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_003319. The email is dated Friday, January 24, 2025, and was sent from Christina McDonald to Nader Baroukh and Joseph Edlow, with the subject, “RE: TPS VZ.”

3. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 2** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_004111–NTPSA2_004112. The email is dated Saturday, January 25, 2025, and was sent from Thomas Gildea to John Miles and Christina McDonald, with additional individuals CC’d, with the subject “Re: access to the vacatur document.”

4. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 3** is a true and correct copy of an email communication produced by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_000788. The email is dated Saturday, January 25, 2025, and was sent from Joseph Edlow to Connie Nolan.

5. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 4** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_003626–NTPSA2_003628. The email is dated Saturday, January 25, 2025, and was sent from Joseph Edlow to Christina McDonald, with an additional individual CC’d, with the subject “RE: For review by 5 pm Sat: TPS Vacatur for Venezuela.”

6. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 5** is a true and correct copy of a memo produced by Defendants titled “Summarization of Operational concerns with combining Venezuela TPS Re-Registration 2021 and 2023” and bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_000790.

7. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 6** is a true and correct copy of an email communication produced by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_000847. The email is dated Saturday, January 25, 2025, and was sent from Connie Nolan to Samantha Deshommes.

8. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 7** is a true and correct copy of a memo produced by Defendants titled “Options for Venezuela TPS Extension and Redesignation – September 23, 2023” and bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_001265–NTPSA2_001265_0002.

9. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 8** is a true and correct copy of an article by Maggie Haberman and Michael Gold, dated April 7, 2024, titled *Trump, at Fund-Raiser, Says He Wants Immigrants from ‘Nice’ Countries*, N.Y. TIMES, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/07/us/politics/trump-immigrants-nice-countries.html>. The article details how President Trump, during a 2024 fundraising event, defended and reiterated his remarks distinguishing between what he called “nice countries, you know like Denmark, Switzerland,” and “Norway,” and “unbelievable places and countries, countries that are a disaster.” According to the article, President Trump described migrants entering the United States through the Southern border as, “coming in from prisons and jails. They’re coming in from just unbelievable places and countries, countries that are a disaster.”

10. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 9** is a true and correct copy of an article by Sam Levine, dated September 13, 2024, titled *They’ve Destroyed the Place’: Trump Repeats Racist, Anti-immigrant Lies*, THE GUARDIAN, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/sep/13/trump-repeats-lies-haitian-immigrants>. The article describes a press conference in Los Angeles, during which President Trump stated: “In Springfield, Ohio, 20,000 illegal migrant Haitians have descended upon a town of 58,000 people, destroying their way of life. They’ve destroyed the place[.] [...] People don’t like to talk about it. Even the town doesn’t like to talk about it, because it sounds so bad for the town. They live there ... for years it was a great place. Safe. Nice. Now they have 20,000 and I actually heard today it’s 32,000.”

11. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 10** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_000677–NTPSA2_000677_0001. The email is

1 dated Tuesday, January 28, 2025, and was sent from Tony Pham to Marc Rosenblum and Ihsan
2 Gunduz, with the subject “RE: TPS VZ Termination: Data & Policy Matters.”

3 12. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 11** is a true and correct copy of an email communication
4 produced by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_004081. The email is dated Monday,
5 January 27, 2025, and was sent from Christina McDonald to Brian Kelliher, with an additional
6 individual CC’d, with the subject “Termination Notice.”

7 13. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 12** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced
8 by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_001012–NTPSA2_001012_0001. The email
9 thread is dated Monday, January 27, 2025, and was sent from Amany Ezeldin to Amany Ezeldin,
10 with the subject “Venezuela TPS.”

11 14. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 13** is a true and correct copy of an excerpt of a privilege
12 log entry provided by Defendants on May 19, 2025 and corrected on May 21, 2025.
13 NTPSA_PRIVID_000363 logs an email from Joe Mazzara to James Percival dated January 26 1:42
14 PM with subject “FW:TPS VZ Termination: Draft Notice” and three attachments: (1) Options for
15 Venezuela TPS Extension and Redesignation.docx; (2) SUMMARY Options for Venezuela TPS
16 Extension (9.25.23).docx; and (3) TPS Vacatur - Venezuela 2025-01-26 at 1021 am.docx.

17 15. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 14** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced
18 by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_002978–NTPSA2_002980. The email is dated
19 Thursday, January 30, 2025, and was sent from Joseph Mazzara to Christina McDonald and James
20 Percival, with additional individuals CC’d, with the subject “RE: VZ Vacatur Notice – Publication
21 Info.”

22 16. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 15** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced
23 by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_003515–NTPSA2_003516. The email is dated
24 Wednesday, January 29, 2025, and was sent from Samantha Deshommes to Aaron Calkins, with an
25 additional individual CC’d, with the subject “FW: VZ TPS DM.”

26 17. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 16** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced
27 by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_003990–NTPSA2_003992. The email is dated
28

Thursday, January 30, 2025, and was sent from Seth Halper-Stromberg to “OGC ES OELD” and Daniel Halsig, with additional individuals CC’d, with the subject “RE: OG CEO Tracking & Coordination – 30 Jan 25 Roll Up.”

18. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 17** is a true and correct copy of an email communication produced by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_000933. The email is dated Tuesday, January 28, 2025, and was sent from Ted Kim to Joseph Edlow, with the subject “Venezuela country conditions” and with the attachment “Relevant quotes from updated Venezuela COI sources (012825)_positive improvements highlighted.docx.”

19. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 18** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_001039–NTPSA2_001039_0002. The email is dated Monday, January 27, 2025, and was sent from Emmarie (Emma) Krichinsky to Rebecca Tanner and Thomas Perkowski, with “RAIO Research” CC’d, with the subject “RE: Venezuela TPS.”

20. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 19** is a true and correct copy of a document with the file name “Relevant quotes from updated Venezuela COI sources (012825) positive improvements highlighted.docx,” produced by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_000874–NTPSA2_000874_0003.

21. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 20** is a true and correct copy of a Memorandum for the Secretary, signed by Ur M. Jaddou on January 9, 2025, with the subject “Extension of the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation and Consolidation of Filing Processes,” produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_000074–NTPSA2_000074_0010.

22. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 21** is a true and correct copy of a draft Federal Register Notice by the Department of Homeland Security, titled “Partial Vacatur of 2024 Temporary Protected Status Decision for Haiti,” produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_004013–NTPSA2_004026.

23. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 22** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_003069–NTPSA2_003073. The email is dated

1 Friday, January 31, 2025, and sent from an Unspecified Sender to Christina McDonald, Samantha
2 Deshommes, and Joseph Edlow, with additional individuals CC'd, with the subject "RE: TPS VZ:
3 Final signed version of USCIS Recommendation Memo?"

4 24. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 23** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced
5 by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_003129. The email is dated Friday, January 31,
6 2025, and sent from Joseph Edlow to Christina McDonald, James Percival, Joseph Mazzara, Nader
7 Baroukh, and Brian Kelliher, with the subject "RE: DOS Letter to DHS - Recommendation to
8 Terminate TPS Designation - Venezuela."

9 25. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 24** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced
10 by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_000870. The email is dated Monday, February
11 3, 2025, and was sent from Samantha Deshommes to Rená Cutlip-Mason, with the subject "DOS
12 Letter to DHS – Recommendation to Terminate TPS Designation – Venezuela 01.31.2025.pdf."

13 26. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 25** is a true and correct copy of a draft Memorandum
14 From the Secretary, produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_000857–
15 NTPSA2_000857_0004.

16 27. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 26** is a true and correct copy of a draft Memorandum
17 From the Secretary, produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_000834–
18 NTPSA2_000834_0004.

19 28. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 27** is a true and correct copy of a Memorandum From the
20 Secretary dated January 30, 2025, from Jennifer B. Higgins, with the subject "Recommendation for
21 the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation," produced by Defendants bearing the
22 Bates range: NTPSA2_000729–NTPSA2_000729_0004.

23 29. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 28** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced
24 by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_001005. The email is dated Monday, January
25 27, 2025, and sent from Rená Cutlip-Mason to Amany Ezeldin, Sasha Ridley, and Andrew Block,
26 with the subject "FW: Venezuela TPS."

30. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 29** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_001043. The email is dated Monday, January 27, 2025, and sent from Emmarie (Emma) Krichinsky to Rebecca Tanner, with the subject “FW: Venezuela TPS.”

31. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 30** is a true and correct copy of a document produced by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_000950–NTPSA2_000950_0003.

32. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 31** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_001010–NTPSA2_001010_0001. The email is dated Monday, January 27, 2025, and sent from Amany Ezeldin to Rená Cutlip-Mason, Sasha Ridley, and Andrew Block, with the subject “RE: Venezuela TPS.”

33. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 32** is a an article, dated October 10, 2021, titled *Trump Slams Haitians Attempting to Enter U.S., Says They ‘Probably Have AIDS,’* ABC 7, available at <https://abc7.com/haitian-migrants-donald-trump-former-president-immigration/11108741/>. The article describes a Fox interview with President Trump, in which he states: “Take a look at what's happening in Haiti. A tremendous problem with AIDS[.] [...] Many of those people will probably have AIDS and they're coming into our country and we don't do anything about it. We let everybody come in. It's like a death wish for our country.”

34. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 33** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_000881–NTPSA2_000881_0002. The email is dated Friday, January 31, 2025, and sent from Samantha Deshommes to Ruhee Vagle, Sasha Ridley, Rená Cutlip-Mason, Amany Ezeldin, Andrew Block, Carly Salazar, and Karine Noncent, with an additional individual CC’d, with the subject “RE: AD1 passback: TPS Ven Recommendation memo - Needs EXSO Formatting and AD1 Signature.”

35. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 34** is a true and correct copy of a true and correct copy of a draft Memorandum From the Secretary dated January 30, 2025, from Jennifer B. Higgins, with the subject “Recommendation for the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation,” produced by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_000733–NTPSA2_000733_0005.

1 36. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 35** is a true and correct copy of an email communication
2 produced by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_004121. The email is dated Tuesday,
3 February 4, 2025, and sent from Brian Kelliher to Christina McDonald, Nader Baroukh, and Rene
4 Browne, with the subject “RE: TPS Haiti Docs.”

5 37. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 36** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced
6 by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_003938–NTPSA2_003939. The email is dated
7 Friday, February 14, 2025, and sent from Christina McDonald to Joseph Mazzara and James
8 Percival, with additional individuals CC’d, with the subject “FW: For S1 action - USCIS Notice -
9 TPS Haiti Partial Vacatur.”

10 38. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 37** is a true and correct copy of a memo titled “TPS Haiti”
11 produced by Defendants bearing the Bates number: NTPSA2_004370.

12 39. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 38** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced
13 by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_004398–NTPSA2_004399. The email is dated
14 Monday, February 17, 2025, and sent from James Percival to Joseph Mazzara and Juliana Blackwell,
15 with the subject “Re: [Review Request] USCIS Notice - TPS Haiti Partial Vacatur.”

16 40. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 39** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced
17 by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_003487–NTPSA2_003489. The email is dated
18 Thursday, February 13, 2025, and sent from Karine Noncent to Amany Ezeldin, Samantha
19 Deshommes, Sasha Ridley, Sheila Mahmoudi, and Tatyana Delgado, with the subject “RE: Haiti
20 stats.”

21 41. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 40** is a true and correct copy of an email thread produced
22 by Defendants bearing the Bates range: NTPSA2_003412–NTPSA2_003417. The email is dated
23 Wednesday, February 12, 2025, and sent from Connie Nolan to Sheila Mahmoudi, Alexander King,
24 Amany Ezeldin, Sasha Ridley, Mirna Smith, Samantha Deshommes, with additional individuals
25 CC’d, with the subject “Re: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice.”

26 42. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 41** is a true and correct copy of an excerpt of the transcript
27 of Secretary Noem’s confirmation hearing, held January 15, 2025.

43. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 42** is a true and correct copy of the transcript of Secretary Noem's January 29, 2025 appearance on Fox & Friends.

44. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 43** is a true and correct copy of the transcript of a February 2, 2025 panel discussion on Meet the Press, featuring Secretary Noem and Senators Eric Schmitt and Mark Kelly.

45. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 44** is a true and correct copy of an article written by Elijah T. Stagers, titled *The Racialization of Crimes Involving Moral Turpitude*, which appeared in Vol. 12:17 of the *Georgetown Journal of Law & Modern Critical Race Perspectives*, published in 2020.

46. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 45** is a true and correct copy of an article written by Deirdre Pfeiffer and Xiaoqian Hu, titled *Deconstructing racial code words*, which appeared in Vol. 58 of the *Law & Society Review*, published in 2024.

47. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 46** is a true and correct copy of an article written by InSight Crime's Venezuela Investigative Unit, titled *Is Venezuela's Tren de Aragua 'Invading' the US?*, which appeared on insightcrime.org on April 1, 2024.

48. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 47** is a true and correct copy of an article written by InSight Crime's Venezuela Investigative Unit, titled *What We Know About Tren de Aragua's US Presence*, which appeared on insightcrime.org on October 4, 2024.

49. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 48** is a true and correct copy of an article written by Charles Larratt-Smith and John Polga-Hecimovich, titled *How Much of a Threat is Tren de Aragus in the U.S.?*, which appeared on Americas Quarterly on December 9, 2024.

50. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 49** is a true and correct copy of an excerpt of the transcript of a December 16, 2023 campaign speech made by President Trump in Durham, New Hampshire and broadcast on C-SPAN.

51. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 50** is a true and correct copy of an excerpt of the transcript of the September 10, 2024 presidential debate between Vice President Kamala Harris and President Donald Trump, broadcast on ABC News.

52. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 51** is a true and correct copy of the transcript of an October 11, 2024 campaign speech made by President Trump in Aurora, Colorado.

53. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 52** is a true and correct copy of the transcript of an October 27, 2024 campaign speech made by President Trump at Madison Square Garden in New York, NY.

54. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 53** is a true and correct copy of the transcript of a December 8, 2024 appearance by President Trump on Meet the Press.

55. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 54** is a true and correct copy of the transcript of a January 22, 2025 interview with President Trump, conducted by Sean Hannity and broadcast on Fox & Friends.

56. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 55** is a true and correct copy of an article by Josh Dawsey, dated January 12, 2018, titled Trump Derides Protections for Immigrants from ‘Shithole’ Countries, WASH. POST, available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-attacks-protections-for-immigrants-from-shithole-countries-in-oval-office-meeting/2018/01/11/bfc0725c-f711-11e7-91af-31ac729add94_story.html. The article summarizes various statements by President Trump, including about TPS.

57. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 56** is a true and correct copy of an article written by Julie Hirschfeld Davis, titled *Trump Calls Some Unauthorized Immigrants ‘Animals’ in Rant*, published in the New York Times on May 16, 2018.

58. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 57** is a true and correct copy of a January 29, 2025 social media post by Secretary Kristi Noem on the X social media platform using the handle “@Sec_Noem,” which is also available at https://x.com/sec_noem/status/1884752724194963594?s=46&t=DFMGDqrcqeJ4X9klKmN2s. This post shares an excerpt of a CNN interview of Secretary Noem, in which she explained that the Venezuela TPS vacatur reflected President Trump’s “desire” to make sure TPS was “used properly,” adding that “when the President gives a directive, the Department of Homeland Security will follow it.”

1
2 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the
3 foregoing is true and correct.

4 Executed on July 17, 2025, in Claremont, California.

5 /s/ Jessica Karp Bansal

6 Jessica Karp Bansal
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EXHIBIT 1

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2025 6:43 PM
To: [Redacted]; Baroukh, Nader
[Redacted]; Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]
Subject: RE: TPS VZ

Hi Joe: Welcome back! (Haven't seen you since Homestead Farm ●)

We are drafting the TPS vacatur notice this evening. We need some input from you, especially operational matters related to TPS.

Are you by chance available for a call now to talk to Nader and I? We are at St Es drafting the notice. Joseph Mazzara asked that we submit the document to him by 1 pm on Sunday.

Thank you.

Christina E. McDonald

[Redacted]

From: LAW, ROB [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2025 5:43 PM
To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]; Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]
Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]
Subject: TPS VZ

OGC,

Connecting you here with USCIS OCC to review forthcoming document.

-RTL

EXHIBIT 2

From: Gildea, Thomas S [Redacted]
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 5:37 PM
To: Miles, John D [Redacted] McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Cc: Kleczek, Marguerite P (Ania) [Redacted] Schwartz, Claudia R [Redacted] Baroukh, Nader [Redacted] Kelliher, Brian [Redacted] Browne, Rene [Redacted] Smith, Laura (HQ) [Redacted]
Subject: Re: access to the vacatur document

Can you tell me what this is in regards to? I'm assuming it is about the recent TPS decisions. Is this a vacatur of those decisions?

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Miles, John D [Redacted]
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 4:25:41 PM
To: Gildea, Thomas S [Redacted] McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Cc: Kleczek, Marguerite P (Ania) [Redacted] Schwartz, Claudia R [Redacted] Baroukh, Nader [Redacted] Kelliher, Brian [Redacted] Browne, Rene [Redacted] Smith, Laura (HQ) [Redacted]
Subject: RE: access to the vacatur document

Tom,

Thanks for responding, but if you can't access your computer, you probably won't be able to get in. We have to have this in pretty early tomorrow. So Ania, if you can take a look that would be great. It's cleaned up now and ready for our review.

Thanks all.

John

John D. Miles
Principal Deputy Chief Counsel
Office of the Chief Counsel - USCIS
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
[Redacted]

PRIVILEGED & CONFIDENTIAL: This e-mail, including any attachments, may contain confidential and legally privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient or have received this message in error, please immediately notify me and permanently delete this e-mail message and any attachments from your workstation and/or network mail system.

From: Gildea, Thomas S [Redacted]
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 4:22 PM
To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted] Miles, John D [Redacted]
Cc: Kleczek, Marguerite P (Ania) [Redacted] Schwartz, Claudia R [Redacted] Baroukh, Nader [Redacted] Kelliher, Brian [Redacted] Browne, Rene [Redacted] Smith, Laura (HQ) [Redacted]

Redacted

Subject: Re: access to the vacatur document

Is there a doc or link to the doc? I'm out of town so away from my computer until tomorrow night.

Tom

Get Outlook for iOS

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC)

Redacted

Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 3:58:44 PM

To: Miles, John D

Redacted

Cc: Gildea, Thomas S

Redacted

Kleczek, Marguerite P (Ania)

Redacted

Schwartz, Claudia R

Redacted

Baroukh, Nader

Redacted

; Kelliher, Brian

Redacted

Browne, Rene

Smith, Laura (HC)

Subject: RE: access to the vacatur document

John: I will provide access to Ania and Tom.

Christina E. McDonald

Redacted

From: Miles, John D

Redacted

Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 4:57 PM

To: McDonald, Christina (OGC)

Redacted

Cc: Gildea, Thomas S

Redacted

Kleczek, Marguerite P (Ania)

Redacted

Schwartz, Claudia R

Redacted

Subject: access to the vacatur document

Christina,

Could you please give Ania and Tom access to the document. They are probably in the best position to give really constructive thoughts as they were involved in the January notice. I'm not sure Tom is looking for this, so he may not get it in time. Tom and Ania, we are really in showstoppers only at this point, and not at all interested in revisiting the substance of whether this should go forward. Christina, can you please let us know about the deadlines for review. Thanks all.

John

John D. Miles

Principal Deputy Chief Counsel

Office of the Chief Counsel - USCIS

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Redacted

PRIVILEGED & CONFIDENTIAL: This e-mail, including any attachments, may contain confidential and legally privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient or have received this message in error, please immediately notify me and permanently delete this e-mail message and any attachments from your workstation and/or network mail system.

EXHIBIT 3

From: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 9:23:57 AM
To: Nolan, Connie L
Subject:

I hate to bother you with work stuff today but the secretary will be vacating the Jan 10 tps re-registration for Venezuela. By combining the 2021 and 2023 designations, there is some talk that it presented operational challenges for USCIS...can you give me a summary of what those challenges are so I can write a few paragraphs and add it into the draft federal register notice?

EXHIBIT 4

From: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted] **Redacted**

Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 12:25 PM

To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]

Cc: Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]

Subject: RE: For review by 5 pm Sat: TPS Vacatur for Venezuela

Attach: TPS Vacatur - Venezuela 1108 + JBE.docx

Christina and Nader,
Attached is the draft that includes the operational concerns with the notice. Happy to have our SME's flesh out more if needed.
Joe

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]

Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 11:09 AM

To: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]

Cc: Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]

Subject: RE: For review by 5 pm Sat: TPS Vacatur for Venezuela

Great There have been additional edits this am. If you haven't yet started working in the doc. Please work in the ATTACHED version. Thank you.

Christina E. McDonald

Redacted

From: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]

Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 11:06 AM

To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]

Cc: Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]

Subject: Re: For review by 5 pm Sat: TPS Vacatur for Venezuela

Confirmed. Just got the info from my people and will be adding shortly and sending your way

Get Outlook for iOS

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]

Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 10:46:55 AM

To: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]

Cc: Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]

Subject: RE: For review by 5 pm Sat: TPS Vacatur for Venezuela

Joe: Just wanted to confirm that you received my email – and that you now have the attachement?

Christina E. McDonald

Redacted

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC)

Sent: Friday, January 24, 2025 11:14 PM

To: Edlow, Joseph E. [Redacted]

Cc: Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]

Subject: RE: For review by 5 pm Sat: TPS Vacatur for Venezuela

Joe: Attached is the doc as an attachment.

Btw – the doc is in my OneDrive cloud (not SharePoint). I could move it into SharePoint if you think you can access that instead. I had a similar situation with ICE and CBP earlier this week – but we solved it by having them click on the link and request access.

Christina E. McDonald

Redacted

From: Edlow, Joseph B. [Redacted]

Sent: Friday, January 24, 2025 9:19 PM

To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]; Browne, Rene [Redacted]; Smith,

Laura (HQ) [Redacted]; Kelliher, Brian [Redacted]; LAW, ROB [Redacted]

Cc: Havranek, John [Redacted]; Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]

Subject: RE: For review by 5 pm Sat: TPS Vacatur for Venezuela

I hate to do this piecemeal but I also don't want to waste time... can you just send me the doc in its current form as an attachment and I'll add in my part... hopefully I'll be able to get access to sharepoint and ultimately be able to just incorporate.

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]

Sent: Friday, January 24, 2025 8:39 PM

To: Browne, Rene [Redacted]; Smith, Laura (HQ) [Redacted]; Kelliher, Brian

[Redacted]; LAW, ROB [Redacted]; Edlow, Joseph B. [Redacted]

Cc: Havranek, John [Redacted]; Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]

Subject: For review by 5 pm Sat: TPS Vacatur for Venezuela

Importance: High

You don't often get email from [Redacted] [Learn why this is important](#)

nee/Laura, Brian, Rob, and Joe E:

Available, for your review, is the first (rough) draft of the TPS Venezuela Vacatur notice that Nader and I prepared this evening. Joseph Mazzara set our deadline for 1 pm on Sunday.

By 5 pm on Saturday, can you folks complete your review and draft your parts? Then, we can finalize the document on Sunday morning.

Please work in following link: [TPS Vacatur - Venezuela.docx](#) (Joe Edlow – The system won't let me tag you, and it tells me here you don't have access. There are 2 other ways to get you access, and I did both: (1) I sent you an email with a link (Try that). (2) If that doesn't work, please click on this link – then click on the "request access" link. Once I accept that request, you should be able to access the document).

Thank you.

Christina E. McDonald
Associate General Counsel

for Regulatory Affairs
Office of the General Counsel
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Redacted

EXHIBIT 5

Summarization of Operational concerns with combining Venezuela TPS Re-Registration 2021 and 2023.

When people are filing, we do not have a way to distinguish between Ven 1 (2021) and Ven 2 (2023), which is important as they have two different sets of validity dates.

We had made suggestions to develop a check box at intake so we distinguish between them, and we were told it would take a form change and significant IT development time. Below are the mission concerns if we do not take steps to remedy the disparity between the two populations.

- Without significant system modifications and instructions to the applicants, it will not be possible to distinguish between these different groups at the lockbox during intake or via direct online filing before being routed to ELIS for processing. This will result in delays in accepting and adjudicating these filings. There is no set time to file by, and they can file anytime during the designation periods.
- It will be difficult to operationalize differentiating these two groups of Venezuela TPS beneficiaries in our existing systems. It may be difficult for E-Verify and SAVE to properly verify/confirm employment authorization or eligibility for other benefits. This may lead to confusion in the context of employers requiring employees to provide evidence of nationality and other documents that are not acceptable for I-9 verification purposes. This option may make drafting I-9 guidance extremely difficult which leads to both employers and employees misunderstanding the requirements, resulting in employers inadvertently violating I-9 rules and agencies improperly rejecting documentation.

EXHIBIT 6

From: Nolan, Connie L [Connie.L.Nolan@uscis.dhs.gov]
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 1:12:18 PM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L
Subject:

If there any specials dates we need to be aware of on TPS Ven that if they look to vacate TPS that we need to be aware of. I told Joe from an Operational perspective there are no date issues, but that I would ask you from a policy perspective.

EXHIBIT 7

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Options for Venezuela TPS Extension and Redesignation – September 23, 2023

ISSUE:

- The Secretary has announced an 18-month redesignation of Venezuela for TPS and an 18-month extension of Venezuela's TPS designation. The 18-month redesignation will become effective upon publication of the Federal Register Notice (FRN) making the redesignation effective, anticipated to be on or around October 6, 2023. The 18-month redesignation period would then run from October 6, 2023, through April 5, 2025. Venezuela's existing designation runs through March 10, 2024.
- There are approximately 242,700 current beneficiaries plus 35,900 pending applications (totaling 278,600) under the existing designation and approximately 472,000 Venezuelans estimated to become newly eligible for TPS under the redesignation.
- The question is: Whether the 18-month extension announced by the Secretary will begin at the end of the existing designation, on March 11, 2024, (and run through September 10, 2024) or will instead begin on the same day the redesignation becomes effective, October 6, 2023, (and run through April 5, 2025).

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Option 1 – Concurrent Extension/Redesignation Date

This option provides for the 18-month extension and redesignation of Venezuela for TPS to run concurrently, with the effective dates of both beginning with the publication of the Federal Register notice (FRN). The FRN is currently anticipated to publish on October 6, 2023, so this would mean both periods would run concurrently from October 6, 2023, through April 5, 2025.

Any initial or re-registration applications pending at the time of publication of the FRN or filed thereafter would receive TPS through April 5, 2025. EADs issued in conjunction with these initials or re-registrations would also be valid through April 5, 2025. The FRN would auto-extend Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) for current beneficiaries through the entire redesignation period through April 5, 2025. The initial registration period for the redesignation would run throughout the entire 18 months of the redesignation, and the re-registration period would be set for some shorter amount of time (e.g., approximately 5 months) during the 18-month redesignation. The FRN could auto extend EADs for current beneficiaries through the entire redesignation/extension period, or for some shorter period of time (e.g., 6 or 12 months). Any initial or re-registration applications pending at the time of publication of the FRN or filed thereafter would receive TPS through April 5, 2025. EADs issued in conjunction with these initials or re-registrations would also be valid through April 5, 2025.

PROs:

- Easiest and fastest way to operationalize the extension and redesignation as there would be no out-of-normal process updates to adjudication systems needed.
- Requires no modifications to the existing SCP and PFE development plans.
- Less confusing for employers in that they will not have to try to distinguish between TPS beneficiaries with varying EAD end dates.
- Consistent with the general practice of running TPS redesignations and extensions simultaneously, although this situation differs in that the extension period would be beginning prior to the end of the current designation period.

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- Gets the designations on the same time cycle, so that future redesignations or extensions could also have simultaneous dates.
- Avoids litigation risk associated with claims of disparate treatment between Venezuelans and issuance of documentation with incorrect dates.
- Taking this approach could simplify finalization and clearance of the FRN, increasing the chance it could get to OFR prior to a possible ~~if there are complications resulting from the government shutdown, and an unknown about future ability to publish FRNs, it may provide more certainty by including the extensions for Venezuela in the FRN for redesignations.~~

[CONS:]

- Shortens the length of time that current Venezuela TPS beneficiaries hold TPS by 5 months if Venezuela's designation is not extended in a future TPS action.
 - Note that one way to offset the impact of this could be to extend TPS for Venezuela in advance of the statutorily required 60 days ahead of the end of the validity date. For example, a decision to extend and/or redesignate TPS Venezuela could be announced in December 2024 in advance of the April 2024 expiration date.]
- Given that TPS extensions typically run from the date the current period ends, stakeholders may be anticipating that the announced 18-month extension would run through September 2025. Announcing instead that it only runs through April 2025 may be received negatively from some.
- Because the standard practice has been to start TPS extensions when the current period ends, beginning it early could give rise to litigation on behalf of those who received an extension only through April 2025 rather than through September 2025.]

Option 2 – Two different designation dates for Venezuela TPS

This option provides for differing Venezuela TPS dates and populations. Those registering under the redesignation would hold TPS from October 6, 2023, through April 5, 2025, while those currently holding TPS or who filed their applications for TPS prior to October 6, 2023, would hold TPS through September 10, 2025. Venezuelans filing under the redesignation would have through April 5, 2025, to file their initial TPS applications, and Venezuelans filing re-registration applications would have a 60-day re-registration period. EADs issued for those under the redesignation would have an end date of April 5, 2025, while EADs issued for re-registrants would have an end date of September 10, 2025. ~~There are approximately 242,700 current beneficiaries plus 35,900 pending applications (totaling 278,600) under the existing designation and approximately 472,000 Venezuelans estimated to become newly eligible for TPS under the redesignation. The Secretary has discretion to determine the length of time for TPS, with 18 months being the maximum period permitted in the statute.~~

PROs:

- Current TPS beneficiaries and those with pending applications (approximately 278,600) ~~approximately 240,000~~ would benefit from an additional 5 months of TPS through September 10, 2025. This is particularly important if TPS for Venezuela is not extended when it is next scheduled for TPS action.
- Avoids potential criticism from stakeholders and litigation risk resulting from not providing an extension for the full 18-months from the date the current designation ends.

Commented [HER1]: @Deshommes, Sarantha L - Please verify

Commented [PSL2R1]: Confirmed. Uncertainty is definitely a factor. While we have an argument to make to the OFR that delaying publication would be related to duties we are funded to carry out, there's a small chance there could be pushback from the OFR. Also unknown at this time is how review functions at OGC and OIRA would be implemented during a shutdown.

Commented [AKE3R1]: The FRN would cover both the redesignation and extension either way. No need for a second FRN regardless of the dates. But using one date could simplify FRN clearance, allowing us to publish earlier and avoid impact of the shutdown. Revised accordingly.

Commented [JSC54]: Isn't a con that we could be sued by those who feel they were cheated out of 5 months of their current TPS/EADs?

Commented [AKE5R4]: Yes, that is covered in the last bullet point.

Commented [RDB6]: This seems like an important point in favor of Option 1.

Commented [HER7R6]: Is there precedent for doing this? Is there any way to message this, such as indicating that country conditions will continuously be monitored to determine whether further extension is warranted?

Commented [RDB8]: Are these two bullets redundant?

Commented [HER9R8]: I think the litigation point is important.

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CONs:

- Without significant system modifications that will take time to implement and particular instructions to applicants, it will not be possible to distinguish between these different groups at the lockbox during intake or via direct online filing before being routed to ELIS for processing. (This will result in delays in accepting and adjudicating these filings.)
- It will be difficult to operationalize differentiating these two groups of Venezuela TPS beneficiaries in our existing systems. It may be difficult for E-Verify and SAVE to properly verify/confirm employment authorization or eligibility for other benefits. This may lead to confusion and could lead to discrimination in the context of employers requiring employees to provide evidence of nationality and other documents that are not acceptable for I-9 verification purposes. This option also makes drafting I-9 guidance extremely difficult which leads to both employers and employees misunderstanding the requirements, resulting in employers inadvertently violating I-9 rules and agencies improperly rejecting documentation.
- May have a negative impact on current initial streamline case processing (SCP) efforts for Venezuela. As the two different populations have different end validity dates and continuous residence (CR) and continuous physical presence (CPP) dates, two separate processes will have to be developed creating delays. This is a critical concern given the massive incoming workload of roughly 472,000 newly eligible individuals on top of the approximately 278,600 current and pending beneficiaries.
- Risk of litigation associated with claims of disparate treatment between Venezuelans and issuance of documentation with incorrect dates.
- It will be difficult to synchronize these two different Venezuela TPS designation groups together in any potential future TPS actions. This will result in ongoing operational issues and confusion for stakeholders and employers. Not having parity going forward in the TPS life cycle could also give rise to challenges in the development of recommendations and decisions on TPS Venezuela, as well as FRN publications.

Commented [HER10]: Do we also run the risk of redesignated folks being incorrectly issued EADs through Sept, and thus have a different type of litigation risk on our hands, issuing TPS/EAD beyond the max of 18 months?

Commented [AKE11R10]: Yes. This was presented as a PRO in Option 1. Have added as a CON here.

Commented [RDB12]: Has OIT provided specific and candid estimates of how much this would slow down SCP I-821 and/or SCP PFE?

Commented [AKE13R12]: No detailed estimate at this point. OIT has said it is doable, but we've not asked for an LOE.

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RECOMMENDATION

Commented [HER14]: Should we be providing a recommendation to D1?

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EXHIBIT 8



U.S. Immigration

Birthright Citizenship Order

View From the Border

Detention at Guantánamo

Deportation Flights to Venezuela

Immigration Deal in Florida

U.S. By Associated Press

The New York Times

Politics The Athletic Today Lifestyle Great Reads



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Trump, at Fund-Raiser, Says He Wants Immigrants From ‘Nice’ Countries

At rallies, Donald Trump frequently laments migrants from a list of countries from Africa, Asia and the Middle East as he stokes fears around the surge at the border.



Share full article



Former President Donald J. Trump and his wife, Melania, in Palm Beach, Fla., on Saturday. Lynne Sladky/Associated Press



By **Maggie Haberman** and **Michael Gold**

Maggie Haberman reported from New York, and Michael Gold from Palm Beach, Fla.

April 7, 2024

[Leer en español](#)

Former President Donald J. Trump, speaking at a multimillion-dollar fund-raiser on Saturday night, lamented that people were not immigrating to the United States from “nice” countries “like

Former President Donald J. Trump, speaking at a multimillion-dollar fund-raiser on Saturday night, lamented that people were not immigrating to the United States from “nice” countries “like Denmark” and suggested that his well-heeled dinner companions were temporarily safe from undocumented immigrants nearby, according to an attendee.

Mr. Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, made the comments during a roughly 45-minute presentation at a dinner at a mansion owned by the billionaire financier John Paulson in Palm Beach, Fla., a rarefied island community.

Guests were seated outdoors at white-clothed tables under a white tent, looking out on the waterway that divides the moneyed town from the more diverse West Palm Beach, a mainland city, according to the attendee, who was not authorized to speak publicly about the private event but provided an extensive readout of Mr. Trump’s remarks.

Dozens of wealthy donors helped write checks that the Trump campaign and the Republican National Committee claim totaled more than \$50 million, an amount that would set a record but had not been verified. Campaign finance reports encompassing the date of the event won’t be available for months.



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Some of Mr. Trump's comments were standard fare from his stump speeches, while other parts of the speech were tailored to his wealthy audience.

About midway through his remarks, the attendee said, Mr. Trump began an extensive rant about migrants entering the United States, at a time when President Biden has been struggling with an intensified crisis at the Southern border.

"These are people coming in from prisons and jails. They're coming in from just unbelievable places and countries, countries that are a disaster," Mr. Trump told his guests, according to the attendee. The former president has made a similar claim the heart of his campaign speeches.

He then appeared to refer to an episode during his presidency when he drew significant criticism after an Oval Office meeting with federal lawmakers about immigration during which he [described Haiti and some nations in Africa](#) as "shithole countries," compared with places like Norway.

"And when I said, you know, Why can't we allow people to come in from nice countries, I'm trying to be nice," Mr. Trump said at the dinner, to chuckles from the crowd. "Nice countries, you know like Denmark, Switzerland? Do we have any people coming in from Denmark? How about Switzerland? How about Norway?"

Editors' Picks



Jane Fonda, Sneakerhead



Meet the Champion Who Memorized 80 Numbers in 13.5 Seconds



Making Her Homebuying Debut in Manhattan With \$475,000 to Spend

He continued, "And you know, they took that as a very terrible comment, but I felt it was fine."

Mr. Trump went on to say that there were people coming from Yemen, "where they're blowing each other up all over the place."

During his rallies, Mr. Trump frequently laments migrants from a list of countries from Africa, Asia and the Middle East as he stokes



Yemen, “where they’re blowing each other up all over the place.”

During his rallies, Mr. Trump frequently laments migrants from a list of countries from Africa, Asia and the Middle East as he stokes fears around the surge at the border, which he blames for a spike in crime, blame that has not been supported by available data.

At the dinner, Mr. Trump also lamented the surge of migrants, particularly from Latin America, saying that gang members “make the Hells Angels look like extremely nice people.”

“They’ve been shipped in, brought in, deposited in our country, and they’re with us tonight,” Mr. Trump said.

“In fact, I don’t think they’re on this island, but I know they’re on that island right there. That’s West Palm,” Mr. Trump said, gesturing across the water, according to the attendee.

“Congratulations over there. But they’ll be here. Eventually, they’ll be here.”

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Asked to comment, a Trump campaign official pointed to an official readout of the former president’s event, including that he had discussed the border crisis and the tax cuts that he enacted while in office. The official did not address the specific quotes and did not respond to a question about whether the campaign was disputing them.

Mr. Paulson’s estate sits along the waterway that separates the town of Palm Beach — a wealthy community on a barrier island that, according to the Census Bureau, is 93.8 percent white — from West Palm Beach, where nearly a third of residents are Black and a quarter are Hispanic.

Mr. Trump blamed his successor, Mr. Biden, for the influx of migrants and mocked him and aides for what Mr. Trump said were bad decisions made around the Resolute Desk, which has been used by two dozen presidents.

“The Resolute Desk is beautiful,” Mr. Trump said. “Ronald Reagan



immigrants and mocked him and asked for what Mr. Trump said were bad decisions made around the Resolute Desk, which has been used by two dozen presidents.

"The Resolute Desk is beautiful," Mr. Trump said. "Ronald Reagan used it, others used it."

He then denigrated Mr. Biden, sounding disgusted, according to the attendee: "And he's using it. I might not use it the next time. It's been soiled. And I mean that literally, which is sad."

The attendee who witnessed the moment said that dinner guests laughed and that Mr. Trump's remark was interpreted as the former president saying that Mr. Biden had defecated on the desk.

Mr. Trump also sought to point to parts of his record that could appeal to the wealthy donors in attendance. He highlighted the tax cuts under his administration and asked attendees about whether they had a preference for that measure or his regulations that allowed them to take advantage of specific write-offs, according to the attendee.

"The most successful people in the whole country are in this room," Mr. Trump said.

He ended his remarks with a grave assessment of America's future that has characterized his campaigns for the presidency, but with a more apocalyptic tenor in 2024.

"This could very well be the last election this country ever has," Mr. Trump said, using a line that has become standard at his rallies.

"July 4 is not as important as this as far as I'm concerned."

Maggie Haberman is a senior political correspondent reporting on the 2024 presidential campaign, down ballot races across the country and the investigations into former President Donald J. Trump. [More about Maggie Haberman](#)

Michael Gold is a political correspondent for The Times covering the campaigns of Donald J. Trump and other candidates in the 2024 presidential elections. [More about Michael Gold](#)

A version of this article appears in print on April 8, 2024, Section A, Page 16 of the New York edition with the

Michael Gold is a political correspondent for The Times covering the campaigns of Donald J. Trump and other candidates in the 2024 presidential elections. [More about Michael Gold](#)

A version of this article appears in print on April 8, 2024, Section A, Page 16 of the New York edition with the headline: At Fund-Raiser, Trump Says He Wants More Immigrants From ‘Nice’ Countries. [Order Reprints](#) | [Today's Paper](#) | [Subscribe](#)

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Our Coverage of U.S. Immigration

- **Guantánamo Bay:** The Trump administration has said little about the Venezuelan men who were transferred from Texas to the U.S. military base in Cuba. [Here's what we know.](#)
- **Deported to Panama:** More than half of the migrants from Asian nations sent to the country by the U.S. [have agreed to return to their home countries](#), Panama said. The roughly 150 migrants who refused [have been sent to a camp near the jungle.](#)
- **Kristi Noem:** In a biting rejoinder, the F.B.I. [called comments by the secretary of homeland security “deeply irresponsible”](#) after she accused the agency of corruption and suggested agents had leaked details ahead of immigration arrests.
- **Migrant Children:** The Trump administration [toughened security requirements for sponsors of migrant children](#), which could make it more difficult for minors to be released from federal custody.
- **ICE Agents at Rikers:** After meeting President Trump's border czar, Mayor Eric Adams said he [would issue an executive order to allow federal immigration authorities](#) into the Rikers Island jail complex, a significant shift in New York City's sanctuary policies.

Trump's Latest Target: A Nancy Pelosi Achievement in San Francisco

Trump Targets a Growing List of Those He Sees as Disloyal

Resigns After Remarks About Barron Trump

Octogenarian Who Shot Teen in Kansas City Dies Days After Pleading Guilty

Scientists Describe Rare Syndrome Following Covid Vaccinations

'The Eastern Gate' Is a Lean and Mean Spy Drama

A New Hotel Perched in the Hills of Florence

Alexander Brothers Face More Lawsuits Accusing Them of Sexual Assault

Former N.F.L. Player Arrested for Protest Against MAGA Plaque

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A Leading Anti-Trump Voice Returns to Democrats' Top Think Tank

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A Lonely Holdout Where Republicans Still Resist Trump: Utah

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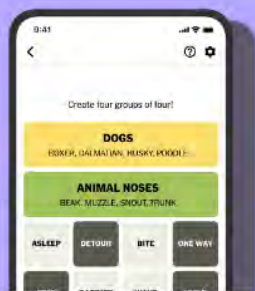
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For These 20-Somethings, Trump ‘Is Making It Sexy’ to Be Republican



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EXHIBIT 9

Donald Trump

🕒 This article is more than 9 months old

'They've destroyed the place': Trump repeats racist, anti-immigrant lies

Trump spews hate again toward Ohio's Haitian migrants, where residents are fearful over bomb threats and hate



📷 Donald Trump holds a news conference in Rancho Palos Verdes, California, on Friday. Photograph: Caroline Brehman/EPA

Sam Levine in New York

Fri 13 Sep 2024 15.36 EDT

Donald Trump repeated racist claims about Haitian migrants in Springfield, **Ohio**, on Friday, doubling down on anti-immigrant rhetoric as residents in the town have faced bomb threats and have detailed their fears amid harassment.

“In Springfield, Ohio, 20,000 illegal migrant Haitians have descended upon a town of 58,000 people, destroying their way of life. They’ve destroyed the place,” Trump said during a rambling press conference at his golf course in

Los Angeles. “People don’t like to talk about it. Even the town doesn’t like to talk about it, because it sounds so bad for the town. They live there ... for years it was a great place. Safe. Nice. Now they have 20,000 and I actually heard today it’s 32,000.”

He later added: “We will do large deportations from Springfield, **Ohio**, large deportations. We’re gonna get these people out. We’re bringing them back to Venezuela,” stating the incorrect country where most of the immigrants are from.

Haiti is **one of 16 countries** the US government has granted temporary protective status (TPS) to because of ongoing conflict, making it easier for immigrants to get authorization to work in the United States. As president, Trump **tried to end** TPS for Haiti and referred to the country as a **“shithole”**.

Trump’s comments come after Tuesday’s presidential debate in which he **first repeated the false claim** that migrants in Springfield are stealing and eating people’s dogs and cats. **The claim** has been repeatedly debunked.

Springfield has received several bomb threats **this week**, prompting it to close its government buildings and evacuate its schools. Haitian residents in the town have reported receiving severe threats and harassment, **according to the Haitian Times**.

JD Vance, who represents the residents of Springfield as Ohio’s US senator, continued to attack the town on Friday, leaning into racist tropes that immigrants were responsible for bringing disease and crime to the community.

In Springfield, Ohio, there has been a massive rise in communicable diseases, rent prices, car insurance rates, and crime. This is what happens when you drop 20,000 people into a small community.

Kamala Harris's immigration policy aims to do this to every town in our country.

– JD Vance (@JDVance) **September 13, 2024**

Just before Trump spoke in California, Joe Biden **condemned** his attacks on Haitians in Springfield.

“A community that’s under attack in our country right now. It’s simply wrong. There’s no place in America. This has to stop - what he’s doing. It has to stop,” Biden said at the White House.

Most viewed

EXHIBIT 10

From: PHAM, TONY </O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=2C428C1739EB4A9697AD1D8044DA61DD-CAFE68D-C1>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 12:33 PM
To: Rosenblum, Marc [Redacted] GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]
Subject: RE: TPS VZ Termination: Data & Policy Matters

Hey Marc,

Not sure if anyone responded, but we are chugging along with USCIS and OGC on the nuts and bolts so we have a small window of flexibility. When do you think we can get some of the data?

From: Rosenblum, Marc [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 4:07 PM
To: GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]; PHAM, TONY [Redacted]
Subject: RE: TPS VZ Termination: Data & Policy Matters

Thanks, both. How soon is this needed?

Marc Rosenblum
[Redacted]

From: GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 1:01 PM
To: PHAM, TONY [Redacted]; Rosenblum, Marc [Redacted]
Subject: RE: TPS VZ Termination: Data & Policy Matters

Marc,

I have also tasked USCIS with other information requested below.

Ihsan Gunduz
Director, Border Security and Immigration Policy
Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans | Department of Homeland Security
[Redacted]

From: PHAM, TONY [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 12:51 PM
To: Rosenblum, Marc [Redacted]
Cc: GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]
Subject: FW: TPS VZ Termination: Data & Policy Matters

Marc,

I am not sure if your shop tracks any of the below data points. This is a project involving termination of TPS status and we need to tell the data story if can be.

However, in addition to the below topics, I would ask if we have data on the following:

- number of Venezuelans removed from the US to any country since the designation
- number of non immigrant visas issued to Venezuelan nationals since the designation

Following up to our morning meeting, below are the relevant data points/policy matters which we discussed and for which you are seeking info from PLCY/Tony Pham, USCIS/Joe Edlow, DOS, etc.

Re the TPS designations for Venezuela:

1. What were migration patterns for Venezuelans after S1 designated Venezuela for TPS in 2021?
2. What is the inter-relationship between the Columbia Honduras Nicaragua Venezuela (CHNV) Parole Processes and TPS? For example, how many CHNV (VZ specifically) parolees later transferred to TPS?
3. Information on violence in Venezuela, such as gang violence.
4. The impact of TPS in Latin America and whether it is a pull factor.

EXHIBIT 11

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) **Redacted**
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 10:59 AM
To: Kelliher, Brian **Redacted**
Cc: Baroukh, Nader
Subject: Termination Notice


Brian:

I created a shell for a termination notice. Can you start drafting? (I'm going to work on the memo for the vacatur notice.)

I used the Haiti termination as the shell. I put all the Haiti language in yellow. That way, if you want to include it, please do.

For any language you add, please leave it with NO highlighting and in redline.

Thanks.

 [TPS VZ Termination.docx](#)

Christina E. McDonald
Associate General Counsel
for Regulatory Affairs
Office of the General Counsel
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Redacted

EXHIBIT 12

From: Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 4:41 PM
To: Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted]
Subject: Fw: Venezuela TPS

1. exodus, winding up in countries with these programs.
2. Google search pull factor. Studies. Not conclusive and it's a combo of push and pull.

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 8:11:32 AM
To: Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted]; Cutlip-Mason, Rená E [Redacted]
 Block, Andrew J [Redacted]
Subject: FW: Venezuela TPS

Friday is the day before the final cutoff for the determination. It sounds like DHS is going to try to terminate the previous S1 decision doesn't it? Let's mentally prepare for that and start thinking about what needs to happen as far as comms etc. Please keep all close hold, do not share with anyone beyond this group, thank you.

Sasha Mehra Ridley
 Chief, Provisional Protections Branch, Humanitarian Affairs Division
 Office of Policy and Strategy (OP&S)
 U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) | Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

From: GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 10:55 AM
To: Cutlip-Mason, Rená E [Redacted]; Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted]
Cc: McGuinness, Dawn [Redacted]
Subject: Venezuela TPS

Hi Rena and Sasha,

Secretary's office is requesting below information on Venezuela by the end of the day tomorrow to make a decision on Venezuela TPS by Friday. Can your team please provide this information? Thanks

TPS designations for Venezuela:

1. What were migration patterns for Venezuelans after S1 designated Venezuela for TPS in 2021?
2. What is the inter-relationship between the Columbia Honduras Nicaragua Venezuela (CHNV) Parole Processes and TPS? For example, how many CHNV (VZ specifically) parolees later transferred to TPS?
3. Information on violence in Venezuela, such as gang violence.
4. The impact of TPS in Latin America and whether it is a pull factor.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks!

Ihsan Gunduz
Director, Border Security and Immigration Policy
Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans | Department of Homeland Security


EXHIBIT 13

PRIVID	DOCID	DOCDATE	RECORD TYPE	PGCOUNT	Prod_BEGDOC#	Prod_BEGDOC#_OLD
NTPSA_PRIVID_000363	NTPSA-DHS HQ_00000211	1/26/2025	E-MAIL	6	NTPSA2_000363	

Prod_ENDDOC#	Prod_ENDDOC#_OLD	AUTHOR	CUSTODIAN	DUPECUSTODIAN	FROM	TO
NTPSA2_000363			James Percival	James Percival	Mazzara, Joe Redact PII	PERCIVAL, JAMES Redact PII

CC	BCC	DATE TIME SENT	DATE TIME RCVD	TIME ZONE OFFSET	SUBJECT	ATTACHLIST
		1/26/2025 13:42	1/26/2025 13:42		FW: TPS VZ Termination: Draft Notice	Options for Venezuela TPS Extension and Redesignation.docx;SUMMARY Options for Venezuela TPS Extension (9.25.23).docx;TPS Vacatur - Venezuela 2025-01-26 at 1021 am.docx

FILENAME	FILEPATH	PROD_ATTACHIDS	Prod_BEGATTACH	Prod_BEGATTACH_OLD	PROD_PARENTID
FW: TPS VZ Termination: Draft Notice.htm	<div>Redact PII</div> <div>(Primary)\Top of Information Store\Inbox</div>	NTPSA2_000364;NTPSA2_000365;NTPSA2_000366	NTPSA2_000363		

Prod_GR OUPID	INTERNE T MSGID	HASH VALUE	TAG - Priviege	TAG - Privilege Descriptions
		B56035CFA94AB20F79B34379A01DB629	AC - Attorney Client; DP - Deliberative Process;	Email communications reflecting predecisional, deliberative discussions among DHS counsel regarding policy options and legal advice for Venezuela TPS termination.

EXHIBIT 14

From: Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 10:28 AM
To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES
 [Redacted]
Cc: BARROW, CLARK [Redacted] Browne, Rene
 [Redacted] Smith, Laura (HQ) [Redacted]
 Baroukh, Nader [Redacted] Kelliher, Brian
 [Redacted]
Subject: RE: VZ Vacatur Notice - Publication Info

Great. Where are we with Vz termination?

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 10:28 AM
To: Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted]
Cc: BARROW, CLARK [Redacted] Browne, Rene [Redacted] Smith, Laura (HQ)
 [Redacted] Baroukh, Nader [Redacted] Kelliher, Brian
 [Redacted]
Subject: VZ Vacatur Notice - Publication Info

Joseph and Jimmy:

The Federal Register has confirmed posting/publication info for the TPS Venezuela Vacatur Notice. The notice will:

- **Post** on the Federal Register website ("public inspection") **TODAY at 11:15 am.**
- **Publish** in the Federal Register on **Mon Feb 3.**

Thank you.

Christina E. McDonald

Redacted

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:54 PM
To: Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted] Blackwell, Juliana [Redacted]
Cc: BARROW, CLARK [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted]
Subject: Re: Venezuela Vacatur Notice

Will do. I will submit it first thing in the morning. (The Federal Register closes at 5 pm.)

From: Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:41:27 PM
To: Blackwell, Juliana [Redacted] McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Cc: BARROW, CLARK [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Venezuela Vacatur Notice

Let's get this up on the fedreg asap.

From: Blackwell, Juliana [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:26 PM

To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Cc: BARROW, CLARK [Redacted] Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Venezuela Vacatur Notice

S1 signed notice attached.

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:25 AM
To: Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted] Blackwell, Juliana [Redacted]
Cc: BARROW, CLARK [Redacted] Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Venezuela Vacatur Notice

+Joe Edlow. Joe called. Since the notice says it is "effective immediately," he is moving forward with implementation. Meanwhile, I spoke to Jimmy – I will be asking the Chief Security Officer to expedite the obtaining of the Secretary's PIV card for signature (DAC-FR card).

Christina E. McDonald

Redacted

From: Mazzara, Joseph <Joseph.Mazzara@hq.dhs.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:09 AM
To: PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted] McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
 Blackwell, Juliana [Redacted]
Cc: BARROW, CLARK [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Venezuela Vacatur Notice

S1's availability is def a better Q for Jimmy, one of the S1's staffers.

From: PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:06 AM
To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted] Blackwell, Juliana [Redacted]
 Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted]
Cc: BARROW, CLARK [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Venezuela Vacatur Notice

I'll find out. When are we getting the card for the staff to do it?

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:03 AM
To: Blackwell, Juliana [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted] Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted]
Cc: BARROW, CLARK [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Venezuela Vacatur Notice

Joseph: Any word on when S1 can electronically sign the notice? I am staff standing by to submit it to the Federal Register.

Christina E. McDonald

Redacted

Redacted

From: Blackwell, Juliana **Redacted**

Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 6:12 PM

To: PERCIVAL, JAMES **Redacted**; Mazzara, Joseph **Redacted**

Cc: BARROW, CLARK **Redacted**; McDonald, Christina (OGC) **Redacted**

Subject: Venezuela Vacatur Notice

Attached is the signed Venezuela Vacatur Notice.

Best,
JJ

Juliana J. Blackwell
Office of the Executive Secretary
Department of Homeland Security

Redacted

EXHIBIT 15

From: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:22 PM
To: Calkins, Aaron L [Redacted]
Bcc: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]
Subject: FW: VZ TPS DM
Attach: Venezuela memo_20250129_clean.docx; DOS Recommendation and Country Conditions Report on TPS for Venezuela.pdf

Hi Aaron – just sharing that the OP&S team drafted and obtained OCC and SCOPS review on the VZ memo. We updated where we could based on the OCC review flags. The draft is now w/ Ishan/DHS PLCY for review and adding to. At this point, we only have the Sept 2024 recommendation and CC from State, so we provided that as requested. If there are updates from State that come through, we can update the memo and attachments accordingly. We're standing by to support. Once the all clear comes through, this should be sent to EXSO for finalizing for signature by AD1.

Sam

From: Noncent, Karine A [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:17 PM
To: GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted] Deshommes, Samantha L
Subject: RE: VZ TPS DM

Hi Ihsan,

Here is the draft VZ memo and the DOS country report.

Appreciate your flexibility,
Karine

Karine A. Noncent
Senior Advisor, Office of Policy and Strategy (OP&S) | USCIS | DHS
[Redacted]

From: GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:07 AM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted] Noncent, Karine A
Subject: RE: VZ TPS DM

Thanks Sam and Karine.

Ihsan Gunduz
Director, Border and Immigration Policy
Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans | Department of Homeland Security
[Redacted]

From: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:04 AM
To: Noncent, Karine A [Redacted] GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]
Subject: RE: VZ TPS DM

Hi Ishan – we'll get this to you as soon as possible. I just spoke to Joe and we're running a few reviews down and should have it to you by 1 pm or so today.

From: Noncent, Karine A [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 10:03 AM
To: GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted] Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]
Subject: VZ TPS DM

Good Morning Ihsan,

Thanks for chatting earlier. I'm connecting you to Samantha Deshommes, the acting OP&S chief. We are finalizing the TPS memo.

Thanks!

Karine A. Noncent
Senior Advisor | Office of Policy and Strategy (OP&S)
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) | Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
[Redacted]

EXHIBIT 16

From: HALPER-STROMBERG, SETH [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 12:16 PM
To: OGC ES OELD [Redacted]; Halsig, Daniel
 [Redacted]
Cc: Gruwell, Abbie [Redacted]; Hunnings, Hillary
 [Redacted]; McDonald, Christina (OGC)
 [Redacted] FOLLICK, JULIA
Subject: RE: OGC EO Tracking & Coordination - 30 Jan 25 Roll Up

Hi Dan,

RLD has the following updates for today's (January 30) Roll-Up:

- The TPS Venezuela Notice announced the S1 decision to vacate Secretary Mayorkas's decision to extend TPS for aliens from Venezuela that he made on January 10, 2023. The notice will post for public inspection today at 11:15. It will publish in the Fed Reg on Mon 2/3.
- OGC RLD and IMM are working on a termination package for TPS Venezuela. The baton is now with USCIS to input the data and rationale supporting the termination. Leadership wants the package to go to the Secretary on Thursday.
- RLD, IMM, and component attorneys continue to work on a 212f interim final rule.
- One of the Secretary's counselors put together a Title 42 working group. He wants to ensure that there is communication between HHS and DHS on Title 42 matters.

Thanks,
 Seth

Seth Halper-Stromberg
 Attorney Advisor
 Regulatory Affairs Division
 Office of the General Counsel
 U.S. Department of Homeland Security

[Redacted]

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From: OGC ES OELD [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 6:09 PM
To: OGC ES OELD [Redacted]; OGC Crisis Cell - Administration [Redacted]
 [Redacted]; McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]; FOLLICK, JULIA
 [Redacted]; OGC Crisis Cell - Core Group (Primary Reps) [Redacted]
 OGC Crisis Cell - OELD (FPS) [Redacted]; OGC Crisis Cell - OELD (Main) [Redacted]
 [Redacted] Whalen, MaryKate [Redacted] Ellison, Jennifer
 [Redacted] Baroukh, Nader [Redacted] Sullivan, Brendan CDR USCG COMDT
 (USA) [Redacted] KOLLER, JULIE (OCC) [Redacted] Goetchius, Glenn H CAPT USCG
 BASE NCR (USA) [Redacted]; Miletello, Emily C LCDR USCG COMDT (USA)

Redacted; Hunnings, Hillary **Redacted** Gruwell, Abbie
Redacted HALPER-STROMBERG, SETH **Redacted** POE REMAGEN,
 LAUREL (OCC) **Redacted** MAGLIARO, MATTHEW (OCC) **Redacted**
 Cc: Perry, Michelle **Redacted**; Bruce, Patrick **Redacted** Keith, Kent J
Redacted Bray, Jeffrey R CIV USCG COMDT (USA) **Redacted** Ahr, Daniel
Redacted Zill, Katherine F **Redacted** DAWSON, PAUL
Redacted Kaplan, Randall **Redacted** Parker, Robert
Redacted Bjornerud, Maria **Redacted** Nguyen, Elizabeth
Redacted Thomas, Katherine **Redacted** Halsig, Daniel
Redacted OGC Crisis Cell - OELD (CFIUS) **Redacted** OGC Crisis Cell -
 OELD (OBIM) **Redacted** KOBLENTZ, MARC **Redacted** Thompson,
 Courtney **Redacted** Palmer, David **Redacted** Ellerbe, Robin A CAPT
 USCG COMDT (USA) **Redacted** WHITE, MOLLY **Redacted** DePoorter, Andrew
Redacted McDonald, Kelly L **Redacted** YARNES, JESSICA
Redacted Mutton, Nicholis **Redacted** Williams, Andrew
Redacted WEINSTEIN, RACHEL (OCC) **Redacted** Mok, Eugene
Redacted; Levin, Erica **Redacted** Gentry, Anthony E (Tony)
Redacted; Brasure, Ian **Redacted** DEVER, JEANNETTE
Redacted Burner, Curt **Redacted** Saltalamachea, Michael
Redacted; O'Hara, Sean **Redacted** Cooper, William
Redacted; COUREY, MARC BENNETT (OCC) **Redacted** ROBERTSON,
 JASON **Redacted**; Corle, Ryan **Redacted** KOLLER, JULIE
Redacted Kelliher, Brian **Redacted** LORD, JAMES
Redacted Kovachy, Matthew **Redacted** FLANNERY, RACHAEL
Redacted Oman, Paul **Redacted** RENEGAR CHARLES P
Redacted Southard, Frederick **Redacted**; GREEN, CECILIA
Redacted TORBETT, LAUREN **Redacted** PHILBIN, BRENDAN
Redacted Schwartz, Brandon **Redacted** Davidson, Michael
Redacted Pachon, Marc **Redacted** Mathias, Susan
Redacted Wood, Alexander **Redacted** Koerner, John
Redacted Halsig, Daniel **Redacted**

Subject: OGC EO Tracking & Coordination - 29 Jan 25 Roll Up

Good evening,

Please find attached the roll up from today's meeting with associated attachments.

Please note the following action items.



- **ALL** – As they are promulgated, request OCCs and OPLA **provide copies of any finalized policy or other guidance issued** by their respective Component leadership (including Chief Counsel) related to interpretation and implementation executive actions. Please send these documents to: Daniel Halsig **Redacted** and CC **Redacted** for tracking and please note if you recommend they be circulated to the entire group.
- **Daily EO Actions Update** – For each day's meeting, each component/ division, **please be prepared to have one speaker provide a 1-2 minute synopsis** of any updates regarding component/division activities and issues related to implementing the EOs and other policy changes.

We look forward to seeing everyone online again tomorrow morning at 10:30 am EST.

Thank you and please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Very Respectfully,
Dan Halsig
Attorney Advisor
DHS – OGC – OELD

Teams:
E-mail:

Redacted

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EXHIBIT 17

From: Kim, Ted H [Redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 12:42 PM
To: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]
Subject: Venezuela country conditions
Attach: Relevant quotes from updated Venezuela COI sources (012825)_positive improvements highlighted.docx

I asked the team to focus on any improvements in Venezuela since our last research paper was submitted to OP&S for TPS purposes in August 2024.

I highlighted 7 excerpts that support some improvements in Venezuela during that stretch.

Ted Kim
Associate Director
Refugee, Asylum & International Operations
USCIS/DHS

EXHIBIT 18

Krichinsky, Emmarie K (Emma)

Redacted

From:**Redacted****Sent:** Monday, January 27, 2025 8:46 PM**To:** Perkowski, Thomas B [REDACTED] Tanner, Rebecca S**Cc:** RAIO Research [REDACTED]**Subject:** RE: Venezuela TPS

Hi Tom,

Thank you so much for your hard work and quick turnaround. I appreciate and value you.

Best,

Emma K. Krichinsky (she/her/هي) | Chief | Research Branch | STAR Division | RAIO Directorate

Mobile: [REDACTED] | [About RAIO Research](#) | [Research News Summary Bulletin](#)**From:** Perkowski, Thomas B [REDACTED]**Sent:** Monday, January 27, 2025 6:40 PM**To:** Krichinsky, Emmarie K (Emma) [REDACTED]; Tanner, Rebecca S**Cc:** RAIO Research [REDACTED]**Subject:** RE: Venezuela TPS

Rebecca/Emma,

Per our conversation from earlier today, please see below for a list of sources which discuss the topics covered in the August 2024 Venezuela COI report for TPS (attached). The sources provide updated information on said topics and cover the period of time from August 2024 to present. The sources listed below are the ones that I was able to encounter by the deadline of COB on Monday, January 27, 2025.

Given the time constraints, I was unable to conduct additional COI research nor draft a more comprehensive work product. If you need anything else from me, please let me know.

Thanks,

Tom

Economic Crisis

- [Venezuela grapples with economic collapse](#), El Pais (Spa.), Jan. 17, 2025.
- [Venezuela economy grew over 9% in 2024, president says](#), Reuters, Jan. 1, 2025.
- [Venezuela depreciation risks reversing years of inflation gains](#), Reuters, Nov. 18, 2024.

Health Crisis

- [Venezuela - Country Profile](#), Health in the Americas, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Sep. 24, 2024.

Food Insecurity

- RAIO Research did not encounter any new information on this topic within time constraints.

Access to Basic Services (Including Electricity, Water, & Fuel)

- *Access to Electricity*

- Power beginning to return in Venezuela after nationwide blackout, Reuters, Aug. 30, 2024.
- Major power outage hits Venezuela's capital, with Maduro government blaming 'sabotage', The Associated Press, Aug. 30, 2024.
- **Access to Water**
 - RAIO Research did not encounter any new information on this topic within time constraints.
- **Access to Fuel (Gasoline & Domestic Gas)**
 - Blast at PDVSA Gas Pipeline Halts Over 60 Percent of Venezuela Fuel Supply, Bloomberg, Nov. 12, 2024.

Education

- Venezuela calls on retired teachers to return to school amid staff shortages, El Pais (Spa.), Oct. 10, 2024.

Political Crisis

- US rejects Venezuelan President Maduro's reelection, but keeps financial lifeline for his government, The Associated Press, Jan. 18, 2025.
- US recognizes Venezuela's opposition candidate as president-elect months after the disputed election, The Associated Press, Nov. 19, 2024.
- Venezuela: Reversing the Slide into Dictatorship, International Crisis Group, Oct. 15, 2024.
- Independent election experts legitimize tally sheets Venezuela's opposition says prove Maduro lost, The Associated Press, Oct. 2, 2024.

Political Repression & Human Rights

- World Report 2025 – Venezuela, Human Rights Watch, Jan. 16, 2025.
- UN human rights watchdog opens investigation into Venezuela presidential election, The Associated Press, Dec. 3, 2024.
- UN international mission reveals gross human rights violations in Venezuela during 2024 electoral period, OHCHR, Oct. 15, 2024.
- UN experts decry worsening repression in Venezuela after contested election, The Associated Press, Sep. 17, 2024.
- Post-Electoral and Human Rights Crisis 2024 in Venezuela: The black book of the dictatorship 2024, Derechos Humanos de Venezuela en Movimiento, Aug. 29, 2024.

Crime & Insecurity

- Maduro Inauguration to Consolidate Criminal Regime in Venezuela, InSight Crime, Jan. 10, 2025.
- Security Forces in Venezuela Extort Detainees Amid Political Repression, InSight Crime, Sep. 24, 2024.

Migration

- Migration from Venezuela surges after Nicolás Maduro snatches election from opposition, Financial Times, Oct. 26, 2024.
- Migration through Darien Gap increased in September, led by Venezuelans after the election, The Associated Press, Oct. 10, 2024.
- Venezuelans crossing the Darien Gap say they lost hope after July's election, The Associated Press, Sep. 26, 2024.

From: Ezeldin, Amany S [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 1:55 PM

To: Krichinsky, Emmarie K (Emma) [REDACTED]

Cc: Block, Andrew J [REDACTED]; Ridley, Sasha M [REDACTED]; Tanner, Rebecca S [REDACTED]; Perkowski, Thomas B [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Venezuela TPS

Thanks Emma. No worries. I think we're very limited on time with these asks so if there's nothing existing, then I'm going to draft answers from information we already have available to us.

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Krichinsky, Emmarie K (Emma) [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 11:16:13 AM
To: Ezeldin, Amany S [REDACTED]
Cc: Block, Andrew J [REDACTED]; Ridley, Sasha M [REDACTED] Tanner, Rebecca S [REDACTED]; Perkowski, Thomas B [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Venezuela TPS

Hi Amany,

Sorry, I was OOO for a short amount of time this morning and I am just now seeing this. I will follow up with Tom and Rebecca on this.

Best,

Emma K. Krichinsky (she/her/هي) | Chief | Research Branch | STAR Division | RAIO Directorate

Mobile: [REDACTED] | [About RAIO Research](#) | [Research News Summary Bulletin](#)

From: Ezeldin, Amany S [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 11:05 AM
To: Krichinsky, Emmarie K (Emma) [REDACTED]
Cc: Block, Andrew J [REDACTED]; Ridley, Sasha M [REDACTED] Tanner, Rebecca S [REDACTED]; Perkowski, Thomas B [REDACTED]
Subject: Venezuela TPS

Hi Emma,

We received a question from DHS on Venezuela that we could use your help on, if possible. It is a very short turnaround (end of day tomorrow).

1. What were migration patterns for Venezuelans after S1 designated Venezuela for TPS in 2021?
2. The impact of TPS in Latin America and whether it is a pull factor.

I'm not sure we can actually answer #2 without a significant study, but adding in the question in case it's something that has come up in research. I've looped in Tom, but not sure if that's appropriate.

Thanks,
Amany

Amany Ezeldin (she/her)
Policy Analyst, Humanitarian Affairs Division (HAD)
Office of Policy and Strategy (OP&S), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
[REDACTED]

EXHIBIT 19

Below are quotes from recent sources, indicating some improvements on topics that were examined in the last Venezuela Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Country of Origin Information (COI) report for which research was conducted in August 2024. All the topics that were included in the last Venezuela TPS COI report are indicated below, even if to indicate that no new information was found.

Economy

News sources in the last three months indicate “moderate economic recovery” and growth.

- “The start of Maduro’s new mandate follows three years of moderate economic recovery, a relative improvement considering the depths from which Venezuela has emerged. This recovery was preceded by a historic economic contraction that drastically altered the nation’s landscape over the past decade. Amid this unprecedented economic crisis — exacerbated by the political isolation of Chavismo — in 2020, the Maduro government began to distance itself from the statist orthodoxy outlined in the *Plan de la Patria*, its flagship economic program. Instead, it adopted a series of market-oriented reforms in an effort to stabilize the economy.” Venezuela grapples with economic collapse, *El Pais* (Spa.), Jan. 17, 2025.
- “Venezuela’s economy grew over 9% in 2024, President Nicolas Maduro said, according to a transcript of an interview published by Mexican media outlet *La Jornada* on Wednesday. ‘In 2023, we had 5.5% (growth). In 2024, according to all scientific, statistical, and technical data, we will surpass 9% growth in gross domestic product, with a very high level of growth in the real economy, as well as in the hydrocarbons sector,’ Maduro told Spanish journalist Ignacio Ramonet.” Venezuela economy grew over 9% in 2024, president says, *Reuters*, Jan. 1, 2025.
- “Currency depreciation is set to reverse years of declining inflation in economically beleaguered Venezuela, public and private sector sources say, as foreign currency sales fall short of demand and the socialist government keeps tight-lipped about its strategy. After years of hyperinflation and amid broad U.S. sanctions, in 2022 the administration of President Nicolas Maduro began using orthodox policies including credit restrictions, lower public spending, a fixed dollar-bolivar rate and central bank sales of billions of dollars in foreign currency to tamp down consumer prices” Venezuela depreciation risks reversing years of inflation gains, *Reuters*, Nov. 18, 2024.
- “After more than nine months of the exchange rate being held at 36.5 bolivars to the dollar, the government in mid-October allowed the currency to float, beginning a depreciation that has seen the bolivar slide to about 45 versus the dollar, according to central bank figures. Analysts say the over-valued currency made imports cheaper than locally-produced goods, impacting Venezuela’s private sector and helping push prices up by 12% in nine months. The untethering of the exchange rate will also put upward pressure on prices in the final quarter of 2024, financial and business sources said, with analysts predicting in a *LatinFocus* survey the rate will end the year at 50 bolivars to the dollar.” Venezuela depreciation risks reversing years of inflation gains, *Reuters*, Nov. 18, 2024.

Public Health

There was incremental improvement in the life expectancy of Venezuelans, from 2000 to 2024.

- “Life expectancy at birth in 2024 was 72.7 years, lower than the average for the Region of the Americas and 0.3 years higher than in 2000 (72.4).” Venezuela - Country Profile, Health in the Americas, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Sep. 24, 2024.

Food Security

RAIO Research did not encounter any new information on this topic within time constraints.

Access to Basic Services (Including Electricity, Water, & Fuel)

- ***Access to Electricity***
 - Reports from the last six months indicate some diminished power outages.
 - “Venezuela in 2019, during a period of political unrest, suffered from regular power outages that the government almost always blamed on its opponents, but that energy experts said were the result of brush fires damaging transmission lines and poor maintenance of the country’s hydroelectric infrastructure. Many of the energy problems have subsided as the South American nation’s economy has stabilized, high inflation has eased and a de facto dollarization has reduced shortages of imported goods.” Major power outage hits Venezuela’s capital, with Maduro government blaming ‘sabotage’, The Associated Press, Aug. 30, 2024.
 - “Power had returned to some parts of Venezuela on Friday evening after capital Caracas and much of the rest of the country were plunged into a blackout that the government blamed on sabotage by the opposition, without providing evidence. President Nicolas Maduro, who is locked in a dispute with the opposition over the outcome of a July 28 presidential election, has often held his political rivals responsible for what he says are ‘attacks’ on the power grid, accusations the opposition has always denied.” Power beginning to return in Venezuela after nationwide blackout, Reuters, Aug. 30, 2024.
- ***Access to Water***
 - RAIO Research did not encounter any new information on this topic within time constraints.
- ***Access to Fuel (Gasoline & Domestic Gas)***
 - Reporting in November 2024 indicates an explosion at a natural gas production facility that shut down over 60% of fuel supply to Venezuela.
 - “An explosion at a key natural gas production facility run by Venezuela’s state owned company Petroleos de Venezuela has shut more than 60 percent of fuel supply to the country... No details were available about how much of oil output will be affected. PDVSA did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The site of the explosion, the Muscar Operations Center in Eastern Venezuela, supplies 63 percent of the natural gas consumed in the country, including for the electricity grid, petrochemicals and iron-ore producing, according to another person with knowledge of the matter.” Blast at PDVSA Gas Pipeline Halts Over 60 Percent of Venezuela Fuel Supply, Bloomberg, Nov. 12, 2024.

Education

- Venezuelan President Maduro announced a plan in October 2024 to provide improvements for teachers and the educational system.
- “The hyperinflationary crisis and severe economic contraction experienced by the country from 2014 to 2020 triggered a mass exodus of teachers at the end of the previous decade, leading to a significant deterioration of the Venezuelan educational system — once a cornerstone of Chavista propaganda regarding social investment and the achievements of its administration. The Venezuelan Federation of Teachers, an educational union, estimates that approximately 100,000 teachers left the profession between 2015 and 2020... As the school year begins, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro announced a plan aimed at providing socio-economic aid and improvements for impoverished Venezuelan teachers, who are among the poorest in South America. This initiative includes a digital credit-based purchasing program for acquiring goods, a new healthcare plan, coverage for urban transportation, and a monthly subsidy that includes food bags. Additionally, the country’s network of public schools, which have deteriorated significantly in recent years, will undergo a comprehensive maintenance plan, for which Maduro has requested logistical assistance from the Armed Forces.” Venezuela calls on retired teachers to return to school amid staff shortages, El Pais (Spa.), Oct. 10, 2024.

Political Crisis

- Following the most recent Presidential election in Venezuela in which President Maduro agreed to work toward a democratic election, the U.S. White House granted a permit for Chevron to operate in Venezuela.
- “Following years of authoritarian rule and withering economic sanctions, President Nicolás Maduro had agreed to work toward a democratic presidential election. The White House, in return, granted him a financial lifeline: a permit for U.S. energy giant Chevron to pump and export Venezuelan oil. Oil wells roared back to life and massive tanker ships returned to Venezuela’s coast to be filled with heavy, hard-to-refine crude destined for the U.S. Maduro’s promised election was neither fair nor free, and the longtime president was sworn in this month for a third six-year term despite credible evidence that his opponent got more votes.” US rejects Venezuelan President Maduro’s reelection, but keeps financial lifeline for his government, The Associated Press, Jan. 19, 2025.
- “The U.S. government recognized Venezuelan opposition candidate Edmundo González as the ‘president-elect’ of the South American country on Tuesday, months after President Nicolás Maduro claimed to have won the July election. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken recognized González in a post on X in which he also demanded ‘respect for the will’ of Venezuelan voters. The administration of U.S. President Joe Biden previously said González earned the most votes in the disputed July 28 election but it had fallen short of acknowledging him as president-elect.” US recognizes Venezuela’s opposition candidate as president-elect months after the disputed election, The Associated Press, Nov. 19, 2024.

Political Repression & Human Rights

RAIO Research has located the following reports on the topic of Political Repression and Human Rights. As a general matter, these reports do not indicate an improved situation.

- World Report 2025 – Venezuela, Human Rights Watch, Jan. 16, 2025.
- UN human rights watchdog opens investigation into Venezuela presidential election, The Associated Press, Dec. 3, 2024.
- UN international mission reveals gross human rights violations in Venezuela during 2024 electoral period, OHCHR, Oct. 15, 2024.
- UN experts decry worsening repression in Venezuela after contested election, The Associated Press, Sep. 17, 2024.
- Post-Electoral and Human Rights Crisis 2024 in Venezuela: The black book of the dictatorship 2024, Derechos Humanos de Venezuela en Movimiento, Aug. 29, 2024.

Crime and Insecurity

RAIO Research has located the following reports on the topic of Crime and Insecurity. As a general matter, these reports do not indicate an improved situation.

- Maduro Inauguration to Consolidate Criminal Regime in Venezuela, InSight Crime, Jan. 10, 2025.
- Security Forces in Venezuela Extort Detainees Amid Political Repression, InSight Crime, Sep. 24, 2024.

Migration

- Following record numbers of migrants, many of them Venezuelan, crossing the Darien Gap in 2023, the number of migrants crossing the Darien Gap in 2024 was reduced by 36%.
- “More than half a million migrants, a record number, crossed the Darien in 2023. More than 65% of them were Venezuelan. Panamanian President José Raúl Mulino, who took office on July 1, promised to curb migration by closing several access points. He also said he would implement a repatriation program with the help of the United States, which has so far added flights to Colombia, Ecuador, and India. The U.S. government agreed to pay for deportation flights for those migrants deemed inadmissible. The plan has not been applied to Venezuelan migrants because Panama, like neighboring Costa Rica, suspended its relations with Caracas after refusing to recognize the electoral victory claimed by Nicolás Maduro. Flights between the two nations are paralyzed. As of Oct. 7, the number of migrants who had crossed through the Darien this year was 277,939 or 36% less than the same period in 2023, according to the Panamanian Ministry of Security. However, the same data showed a sharp increase in September compared to August.” Migration through Darien Gap increased in September, led by Venezuelans after the election, The Associated Press, Oct. 11, 2024.

EXHIBIT 20



RECOMMENDATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

FROM: Ur M. Jaddou UR M
Director JADDOU

Digitally signed by UR M
JADDOU
Date: 2025.01.09
23:43:38 -05'00'

SUBJECT: Extension of the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation and Consolidation of Filing Processes

Purpose: Venezuela has two existing designations for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). One of Venezuela's designations for TPS will expire April 2, 2025; the other will expire September 10, 2025. At least 60 days before a TPS designation expires, the Secretary, after consultation with appropriate U.S. Government agencies, is required to review the conditions in a country designated for TPS to determine whether the conditions supporting the designation continue to be met, and, if so, the length of an extension of the designation.¹ Accordingly, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has completed a review of the conditions in Venezuela to inform the consideration of whether to extend Venezuela for TPS.

As a result of this review, USCIS recommends that you extend Venezuela's most recent designation for TPS for 18 months, from April 3, 2025, through October 2, 2026, due to extraordinary and temporary conditions that prevent Venezuelan nationals² from returning in safety to Venezuela. USCIS has determined that it is not contrary to the national interest of the United States to permit Venezuelan nationals eligible for TPS to remain in the United States temporarily.

As part of the review process, USCIS has consulted with the Department of State (DOS). Like the USCIS recommendation, DOS provided an assessment indicating that extraordinary and temporary conditions in Venezuela prevent Venezuelan nationals from returning in safety and that the TPS designations should be extended. While the DOS also recommended redesignation, you are required by statute to decide whether to extend or terminate an existing TPS designation at least 60 days

¹ See Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) sec. 244(b)(3)(A). See also Attachment A: Temporary Protected Status Legal Authority.

² In addition to nationals of Venezuela, individuals having no nationality who last habitually resided in Venezuela may also be eligible for TPS under Venezuela's designation. *See* INA sec. 244(a)(1). As such, references to nationals of Venezuela in this memorandum include individuals having no nationality who last habitually resided in Venezuela.

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before the expiration of the current designation, or the designation is automatically extended for a minimum of six months.

USCIS has also evaluated the operational feasibility and resulting impact on stakeholders with having two separate filing processes for the TPS designations. Operational challenges in the identification and adjudication of Venezuela TPS filings and confusion among stakeholders exist because of the two separate TPS designations. To date, USCIS has implemented operational measures to process Venezuela TPS cases for both designations; however, it can most efficiently process these cases by consolidating the re-registration filing processes for the two Venezuela TPS populations. USCIS recommends both existing designations for Venezuela be under one streamlined filing process, which would not change any eligibility requirements. As discussed below, the Venezuela 2021 TPS designation and the Venezuela 2023 TPS designation are based upon the same factual circumstances and legal considerations pursuant to INA § 244, and any individual eligible for TPS under the Venezuela 2021 TPS designation would also be eligible under the Venezuela 2023 TPS designation. For that reason, publication of the Federal Register Notice of the Venezuela 2023 TPS designation extension will allow individuals registered under either the Venezuela 2021 or Venezuela 2023 designation to re-register under the extension. This would not, however, require a beneficiary registered under the Venezuela 2021 TPS designation to re-register at this time. Rather, it would provide Venezuela 2021 TPS beneficiaries with the option of doing so.

TPS Overview: Venezuela was initially designated for TPS on March 9, 2021 (the “Venezuela 2021” TPS designation), on the basis of extraordinary and temporary conditions that prevented nationals of Venezuela from returning in safety.³ On September 8, 2022, DHS extended the Venezuela 2021 TPS designation for 18 months.⁴ On October 3, 2023, DHS extended the Venezuela 2021 TPS designation for another 18 months with an expiration date of September 10, 2025, and separately redesignated Venezuela for 18 months⁵ (the “Venezuela 2023” TPS designation) with an expiration date of April 2, 2025, resulting in two separate and concurrent Venezuela TPS designations.

To be eligible for TPS under the Venezuela 2023 TPS designation, along with meeting the other eligibility requirements, individuals must have continuously resided in the United States since July 31, 2023, and have been continuously physically present in the United States since October 3, 2023. Because Venezuela 2021 TPS beneficiaries were required to have continuously resided in the United States since March 8, 2021, and to have been continuously physically present in the United States since March 9, 2021, such individuals therefore also meet those requirements from the Venezuela 2023 TPS designation. There are currently approximately 607,000⁶ beneficiaries and approximately 60,000⁷ pending initial applications under Venezuela’s TPS designations.

³ See *Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status and Implementation of Employment Authorization for Venezuelans Covered by Deferred Enforced Departure*, 86 Fed. Reg. 13574 (Mar. 9, 2021).

⁴ See *Extension of the Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 87 Fed. Reg. 55024 (Sept. 8, 2022).

⁵ See *Extension and Redesignation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 88 Fed. Reg. 68130 (Oct. 3, 2023).

⁶ Estimate as of January 8, 2025.

⁷ Estimate as of January 8, 2025.

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Assessment of Country Conditions: USCIS and DOS each conducted a thorough review of conditions in Venezuela. The full USCIS and DOS reports, upon which this recommendation is based, can be found in Attachments B and C, respectively. These reports show that extraordinary and temporary conditions continue to prevent Venezuelan nationals from returning in safety. Venezuela was initially designated for TPS due to a severe humanitarian emergency marked by an economic contraction, deepening poverty, reduced access to food and medicine, a collapse in basic services, fuel shortages, human rights abuses and political repression, crime and violence, and increased human mobility and displacement. These conditions persist with continuing complex political, humanitarian, and economic crises, as well as criminal activities of non-state armed groups, repression, and crumbling infrastructure. A detailed discussion of these country conditions follows.

Venezuela is experiencing “a complex, serious and multidimensional humanitarian crisis.”⁸ The crisis has reportedly disrupted every aspect of life in Venezuela. “Basic services like electricity, internet access, and water are patchy; malnutrition is on the rise; the healthcare system has collapsed; and children receive poor or no education. Inflation rates are also among the highest in the world.”⁹ Venezuela’s “complex crisis” has pushed Venezuelans into “poverty, hunger, poor health, crime, desperation and migration.”¹⁰ Moreover, Nicolás Maduro’s declaration of victory in the July 28, 2024 presidential election—which has been contested as fraudulent by the opposition—“has been followed by yet another sweeping crackdown on dissent.”¹¹

Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is also a significant challenge in Venezuela.¹² “Despite a recent economic recovery [...], many families are going hungry and depending on aid to feed themselves.”¹³ Reports indicate

⁸ Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 730, available at: https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023_Cap_4B_Venezuela_ENG.PDF (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

⁹ Iván Reyes, As election looms, Venezuelans see-saw between hope and fear, The New Humanitarian, Jul. 8, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/photo-feature/2024/07/08/election-looms-venezuela-see-saw-between-hope-and-fear> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹⁰ Regina García Cano, As Maduro shifts from migration denier to defender, Venezuelans consider leaving if he is reelected, The Associated Press, updated May 29, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-election-migrants-maduro-9ba01c2cd7246adb9369bf69941d986a> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹¹ Sergio Martínez-Beltrán and Marian Carrasquero, Venezuelans in US anxiously watch home crisis, brace for new migration surge, Morning Edition, National Public Radio (NPR), Aug. 12, 2024, available at: <https://www.npr.org/2024/08/11/nx-s1-5066867/venezuela-maduro-election-migration-usborder-immigration> (last visited Aug. 12, 2024).

¹² Clare Ribando Seelke, Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy, Congressional Research Service (CRS), updated Sep. 1, 2023, pg. 1, available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10230> (last visited Aug. 22, 2024).

¹³ Mariela Nava, In Venezuela, hunger stalks presidential election, Reuters, Jul. 9, 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuela-hunger-stalks-presidential-election-2024-07-09/> (last visited Aug. 22, 2024).

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that Venezuela “suffers the second-highest level of hunger in South America,” with “[s]ome 5.1 million people [...] not getting enough to eat.”¹⁴ The U.N. Special Rapporteur on the right to food reported that “[f]ood insecurity, malnutrition and deterioration in livelihoods is cited as the primary cause for the mass migration out of the country.”¹⁵

Notably, the problem of food shortages and scarcity has abated;¹⁶ however, “supply issues have been replaced by affordability ones.”¹⁷ In 2023, “86% of the population reported not having enough money to buy the food needed in their household,” while around 22% “went permanently hungry at times during the year.”¹⁸ Additionally, “chronic malnutrition is surging among children, leading to stunting, wasting, delayed cognitive development, and higher risks of illness more generally.”¹⁹

Access to Basic Services (Including Electricity, Water, & Fuel)

¹⁴ Mariela Nava, In Venezuela, hunger stalks presidential election, Reuters, Jul. 9, 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuela-hunger-stalks-presidential-election-2024-07-09/> (last visited Aug. 22, 2024).

¹⁵ End of Mission Statement; UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food by Mr. Michael Fakhri; Visit to Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), 1-14 February 2024, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Feb. 14, 2024, pg. 3, available at: <https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2104669/20240214-eom-statement-venezuela-sr-food-en.pdf> (last visited Aug. 22, 2024).

¹⁶ Regina Garcia Cano, Venezuelans turn to odd jobs and gambling to stretch meager wages they hope will grow after election, The Associated Press, updated July 24, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-presidential-election-maduro-crisis-machado-edmundo-4c7f83a5a44a6d80f12d8cad8b67b026> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024); Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, Jun. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Aug. 22, 2024); Follow-Up Report on the Complex Humanitarian Emergency in Venezuela, HumVenezuela, Nov. 2023, pg. 27, available at: <https://humvenezuela.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/FOLLOW-UP-REPORT-ON-THE-COMPLEX-HUMANITARIAN-EMERGENCY-IN-VENEZUELA-2023-2.pdf> (last visited Aug. 22, 2024).

¹⁷ Regina Garcia Cano, UN-backed food expert calls on Venezuela to tackle hunger and urges end to economic sanctions, The Associated Press, Feb. 14, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-food-insecurity-hunger-malnutrition-un-maduro-afb4af4978c09cf0f3e54e1cfe981b5> (last visited Aug. 22, 2024).

¹⁸ Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, Jun. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Aug. 22, 2024).

¹⁹ Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, Jun. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Aug. 22, 2024).

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The lack of access to basic services including electricity, water, and fuel represents another component of Venezuela's crisis.²⁰ Venezuela "experiences regular power outages,"²¹ and "interruptions in electrical service" are common and reportedly occur daily.²² The population suffering intermittent and prolonged power failures increased from 25.9% to 61.9% between 2022 and 2023.²³ Additionally, Venezuelans face "growing challenges to access water and sanitation since the water supply is not continuous, and the quality of water has deteriorated."²⁴ "Potable water is frequently not available for long periods,"²⁵ and many households lack reliable access to potable water.²⁶

Venezuela is also impacted by fuel shortages.²⁷ Venezuela experienced "years of painful fuel shortages that kept drivers in line for sometimes days to fill up their cars and severely restricted Venezuela's industrial and agricultural activity."²⁸ Natural gas — "the fuel essential for cooking, generating power and feeding petrochemical plants and factories" — has also been frequently scarce.²⁹ In 2023, 69.4% of households were impacted by failures in the availability of domestic gas

²⁰ Florantonia Singer, Caracas: The ordeal of living in a city with failed public services, El País (Spa.), Sep. 24, 2023, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2023-09-24/caracas-the-ordeal-of-living-in-a-city-with-failed-public-services.html> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

²¹ Venezuela Country Security Report, Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), U.S. Dep't of State, last updated Mar. 26, 2024, available at: <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Report/34f99e62-2161-412d-bfeb-1e752539f6bf> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

²² Clare Ribando Seelke, Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy, Congressional Research Service (CRS), updated Sep. 1, 2023, pg. 1, available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10230> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024); Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, Jun. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

²³ Follow-Up Report on the Complex Humanitarian Emergency in Venezuela, HumVenezuela, Nov. 2023, pg. 21, available at: <https://humvenezuela.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/FOLLOW-UP-REPORT-ON-THE-COMPLEX-HUMANITARIAN-EMERGENCY-IN-VENEZUELA-2023-2.pdf> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

²⁴ Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 732, available at: https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023_Cap_4B_Venezuela_ENG.PDF (last visited Aug. 26, 2024).

²⁵ Venezuela Country Security Report, Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), U.S. Dep't of State, last updated Mar. 26, 2024, available at: <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Report/34f99e62-2161-412d-bfeb-1e752539f6bf> (last visited Aug. 26, 2024).

²⁶ Clare Ribando Seelke, Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy, Congressional Research Service (CRS), updated Sep. 1, 2023, pg. 1, available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10230> (last visited Aug. 26, 2024).

²⁷ Luke Taylor, 'To be reunited ... would be a dream': Venezuelan exiles' fate hangs on vote, The Guardian, Jul. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/article/2024/jul/25/venezuelan-exiles-election-maduro> (last visited Aug. 27, 2024).

²⁸ Fabiola Zerpa and Lucia Kassai, Oil Majors Fill Venezuela Gas Pumps, Easing Years of Shortages, Bloomberg, Feb. 9, 2024, available at: https://www.rigzone.com/news/wire/oil_majors_fill_venezuela_gas_pumps_easing_years_of_shortages-09-feb-2024-175693-article/ (last visited Sep. 6, 2024).

²⁹ Marianna Parraga, Deisy Buitrago, and Mircely Guanipa, Whoever wins election, Venezuela faces natural gas problem, Reuters, Jul. 24, 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/gas-rich-venezuela-next-president-faces-problem-producing-it-2024-07-24/> (last visited Aug. 26, 2024).

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service.³⁰ Furthermore, most Venezuelans without direct gas in their homes for cooking instead “rely on domestic gas services that households pay for by filling gas cylinders at state plants, one per family per month.”³¹ However, “[t]he capacity of each cylinder averages about 25 days and cannot always be replenished regularly.”³²

Health Crisis

The collapse of Venezuela’s healthcare system is one of the most severe aspects of its humanitarian crisis.³³ Venezuela’s health system is marked by deteriorated infrastructure, lack of medical equipment, poor maintenance, lack of public services, deficiencies in the provision of medicines and medical supplies, and power and water cuts, in addition to corruption in the health sector, and underfunded and understaffed health centers.³⁴ Consequently, health indicators in Venezuela have worsened since the collapse of the Venezuelan health system in 2016.³⁵

Venezuela’s public health system has reportedly lost an estimated “70 percent of its capacity since 2016,” and “millions of individuals are unable to access adequate health care” in Venezuela.³⁶ Additionally, Venezuela faces “persistent shortages and deficiencies in the supply of medicines, supplies, equipment and medical treatments.”³⁷

The collapsed health care system has led to the re-emergence of “[s]everal vaccine-preventable

³⁰ Follow-Up Report on the Complex Humanitarian Emergency in Venezuela, HumVenezuela, Nov. 2023, pg. 22, available at: <https://humvenezuela.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/FOLLOW-UP-REPORT-ON-THE-COMPLEX-HUMANITARIAN-EMERGENCY-IN-VENEZUELA-2023-2.pdf> (last visited Aug. 26, 2024).

³¹ Follow-Up Report on the Complex Humanitarian Emergency in Venezuela, HumVenezuela, Nov. 2023, pg. 22, available at: <https://humvenezuela.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/FOLLOW-UP-REPORT-ON-THE-COMPLEX-HUMANITARIAN-EMERGENCY-IN-VENEZUELA-2023-2.pdf> (last visited Aug. 26, 2024).

³² Follow-Up Report on the Complex Humanitarian Emergency in Venezuela, HumVenezuela, Nov. 2023, pg. 22, available at: <https://humvenezuela.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/FOLLOW-UP-REPORT-ON-THE-COMPLEX-HUMANITARIAN-EMERGENCY-IN-VENEZUELA-2023-2.pdf> (last visited Aug. 26, 2024).

³³ Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, Jun. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Aug. 21, 2024).

³⁴ Venezuela – Country Focus, European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), Nov. 2023, pg. 33, available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2023_11_EUAA_COI_Report_Venezuela_Country_Focus.pdf (last visited Aug. 21, 2024).

³⁵ International Protection Needs of Venezuelan Nationals, Amnesty International, Oct. 2023, pg. 5, available at: <https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2099475/AMR5373312023ENGLISH.pdf> (last visited Aug. 21, 2024).

³⁶ Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 731, available at: https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023_Cap_4B_Venezuela_ENG.PDF (last visited Aug. 21, 2024).

³⁷ Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 731, available at: https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023_Cap_4B_Venezuela_ENG.PDF (last visited Aug. 21, 2024).

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diseases,”³⁸ and “[p]reviously eradicated diseases such as diphtheria and measles [...] have become a major concern.”³⁹ “Mosquito control measures have deteriorated, and malaria cases have returned to areas that had not had cases for many years.”⁴⁰

Education

Reports indicate that “dilapidated infrastructure, the lack of teachers and of public transportation – combined with the shortcomings of the school meals programme – are driving many students away. The impoverishment of families due to high inflation is also forcing children to drop out of school to work. In 2023, 40% of students between the ages of three and 17 attended school irregularly.”⁴¹

Economic Crisis

Venezuela “has faced a long-running economic crisis,”⁴² with its economy suffering from “a prolonged meltdown marked by triple-digit inflation and a mass exodus of millions of migrants seeking better prospects elsewhere.”⁴³ Reporting in July 2024 indicated that over the last 10 years, gross domestic product in Venezuela has declined by about 73%.⁴⁴ Though Venezuela experienced some economic improvement in 2024,⁴⁵ it is “insufficient for an economy like Venezuela’s, urgently in need of double-digit growth for several years in order to return to what it once was.”⁴⁶

³⁸ Jenny Garcia, Stephane Helleringer, Gerardo Correac, and Maria Di Brienzac, Updated estimates of infant mortality in Venezuela, *The Lancet Global Health*, Volume 12, Issue 1, e25 - e27, Jan. 2024, available at:

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(23\)00520-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(23)00520-X/fulltext) (last visited Sep. 13, 2024).

³⁹ Clare Ribando Seelke, Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy, Congressional Research Service (CRS), updated Sep. 1, 2023, pg. 1, available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10230> (last visited Aug. 21, 2024).

⁴⁰ Venezuela Country Security Report, Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), U.S. Department of State, last updated Mar. 26, 2024, available at: <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Report/34f99e62-2161-412d-bfeb-1e752539f6bf> (last visited Aug. 21, 2024).

⁴¹ Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), *The New Humanitarian*, Jun. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

⁴² Mayela Armas, Venezuela's government doubles down on inflation control ahead of election, *Reuters*, Feb. 28, 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuelas-government-doubles-down-inflation-control-ahead-election-2024-02-28/> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

⁴³ Mayela Armas, Venezuela economy grew 5% in 2023, will reach 8% this year-Maduro, *Reuters*, Jan. 15, 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuela-economy-grew-5-2023-will-reach-8-this-year-maduro-2024-01-15/> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

⁴⁴ Mariela Nava, In Venezuela, hunger stalks presidential election, *Reuters*, Jul. 9, 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuela-hunger-stalks-presidential-election-2024-07-09/> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

⁴⁵ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela experiences an economic recovery in times of electoral uncertainty, *El País* (Spa.), Jul. 22, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/economy-and-business/2024-07-22/venezuela-experiences-an-economic-recovery-in-times-of-electoral-uncertainty.html> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

⁴⁶ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela experiences an economic recovery in times of electoral uncertainty, *El País* (Spa.), Jul. 22, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/economy-and-business/2024-07-22/venezuela-experiences-an-economic-recovery-in-times-of-electoral-uncertainty.html> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

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Political Repression & Human Rights

According to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Maduro and his representatives have “systematically violated human rights, including freedom of expression, to facilitate the concentration of power in the executive branch, to discourage political participation and to undermine the independence of institutions.”⁴⁷ Conditions have grown worse due to harsher crackdowns by Maduro and his representatives on the opposition and their use of thoroughly flawed elections to seize full control of state institutions. Maduro and his representatives have closed off virtually all channels for political dissent, restricting civil liberties and prosecuting perceived opponents without regard for due process.”⁴⁸ Furthermore, the IACHR has reported allegations that “serious human rights violations” have been committed in Venezuela, which, it asserts, “may amount to crimes against humanity.”⁴⁹ In late June 2023, International Criminal Court judges “authorized the resumption of an investigation into alleged crimes against humanity in Venezuela.”⁵⁰ Human Rights Watch reported that, in September 2023, “the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) found serious human rights violations that continued the same patterns of conduct that the FFM had previously qualified as crimes against humanity.”⁵¹

Reports indicate that leading up to the recent Venezuelan presidential election, the electoral process was marred by human rights abuses and irregularities that kept the playing field uneven, with reports of Maduro and his representatives repeatedly committing “systematic human rights violations against critics and opposition leaders.”⁵² According to Amnesty International, the election period was marked with escalating repression with “incessant attacks on civic space, tens of arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, torture, reprisals against businesses and contractors providing services to opposition figures, and arbitrary and abusive administrative measures.”⁵³

⁴⁷ Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 720, available at: https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023_Cap_4B_Venezuela_ENG.PDF (last visited Aug. 30, 2024).

⁴⁸ Freedom in the World 2024 – Venezuela, Freedom House, Feb. 29, 2024, available at: <https://freedomhouse.org/country/venezuela/freedom-world/2024> (last visited Aug. 29, 2024).

⁴⁹ Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 720, available at: https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023_Cap_4B_Venezuela_ENG.PDF (last visited Aug. 30, 2024); International Protection Needs of Venezuelan Nationals, Amnesty International, Oct. 2023, pg. 3, available at: <https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2099475/AMR5373312023ENGLISH.pdf> (last visited Aug. 30, 2024).

⁵⁰ World Report 2024 - Venezuela, Human Rights Watch, Jan. 11, 2024, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/venezuela> (last visited Aug. 30, 2024).

⁵¹ World Report 2024 - Venezuela, Human Rights Watch, Jan. 11, 2024, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/venezuela> (last visited Aug. 30, 2024).

⁵² Venezuela: Repression Mars Key Upcoming Election, Human Rights Watch, Jul. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/25/venezuela-repression-mars-key-upcoming-election> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

⁵³ Venezuela: After an electoral period marked by repression, a commitment to human rights is imperative, Amnesty International, Jul. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/07/venezuela-after-electoral-period-marked-repression-commitment-human-rights-imperative/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

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On July 31, 2024, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reported that, since the National Electoral Council's declaration that Maduro had won the presidential election in the early morning hours of July 29, "thousands of people—including men, women, children, and the elderly—have taken to the streets across the country to protest the results."⁵⁴ In the aftermath of the election, Maduro and his representatives "mounted a furious campaign against anyone challenging the declared results of the vote, unleashing a wave of repression that human rights groups say is unlike anything the country has seen in recent decades."⁵⁵

Crime & Insecurity

Venezuela was once considered the most dangerous country in Latin America.⁵⁶ However, "a discernible reduction in the overall levels of violence could be observed" in 2023 and 2024.⁵⁷ Various factors behind the apparent decline in crime include the country's "ongoing economic crisis," which has reportedly reduced "opportunities for extortion and ransom kidnappings," and led Venezuelan criminal groups to "infiltrate Venezuelan diasporas settled in other Latin American countries."⁵⁸ The "monopolization of violence in some regions" by "non-state armed groups," as well as pacts between Maduro representatives and some criminal groups, have also reportedly contributed to improved perceptions of security in certain areas.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, Venezuelans continue to "face physical insecurity and violence from several sources, including irregular armed groups, security forces, and organized gangs."⁶⁰ The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) reported that "Criminal armed groups often operate with the cooperation, or tolerance of state security forces" in Venezuela.⁶¹ Moreover, security forces in Venezuela have been "accused of committing human rights abuses such as torture and cruel,

⁵⁴ Venezuela: UN Fact-Finding Mission expresses alarm over human rights violations in post-election context, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Jul. 31, 2024, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/07/venezuela-un-fact-finding-mission-expresses-alarm-over-human-rights> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

⁵⁵ Frances Robles, 'Operation Knock-Knock': Venezuela Sweeps Up Dissenters After Disputed Vote, The New York Times, Aug. 10, 2024, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/10/world/americas/venezuela-election-maduro.html> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

⁵⁶ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela's Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

⁵⁷ Annual Report Violence 2023, Venezuelan Violence Observatory (OVV), Dec. 28, 2023, pg. 30, available at: <https://observatoriodeviolencia.org.ve/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/OVV-Violence-in-Venezuela-Annual-Report-2023-.pdf> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024); Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela's Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

⁵⁸ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela's Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

⁵⁹ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela's Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

⁶⁰ Freedom in the World 2024 – Venezuela, Freedom House, Feb. 29, 2024, available at: <https://freedomhouse.org/country/venezuela/freedom-world/2024> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

⁶¹ Venezuela – Country Focus, European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), Nov. 2023, pg. 42, available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2023_11_EUAA_COI_Report_Venezuela_Country_Focus.pdf (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

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inhuman and degrading treatment, including sexual and gender-based violence, and killings consistent with extrajudicial executions.”⁶²

In summary, extraordinary and temporary conditions, including a severe humanitarian emergency marked by an economic contraction, deepening poverty, reduced access to food and medicine, a collapse in basic services, fuel shortages, human rights abuses and political repression, crime and violence, and increased human mobility and displacement, continue to prevent Venezuelan nationals from returning in safety.

Timeliness: You are required by statute to decide whether to extend or terminate an existing TPS designation at least 60 days before the expiration of the current designation, or the designation is automatically extended for a minimum of six months.⁶³ The Venezuela 2023 TPS designation expires on April 2, 2025, and the Secretary of Homeland Security must make a decision by February 1, 2025, or the automatic extension occurs. You are further required to provide timely notice of your decision through publication in the *Federal Register*.⁶⁴ Your earliest decision will facilitate publication of the *Federal Register* notice, to provide predictability and clarity to TPS beneficiaries, their employers, and benefit-granting agencies.

⁶² Venezuela - Country Focus, European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), Nov. 2023, pg. 26, available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/ caso/PLib/2023_11_EUAA_COI_Report_Venezuela_Country_Focus.pdf (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

⁶³ See INA sec. 244(b)(3)(A), (C).

⁶⁴ See INA sec. 244(b)(3)(A).

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Recommendation: Following interagency consultation with DOS and a thorough review of the conditions in Venezuela, USCIS recommends that you extend the 2023 Designation of Venezuela for TPS for 18 months, from April 3, 2025, through October 2, 2026, on the basis of extraordinary and temporary conditions that continue to prevent Venezuelan nationals from returning in safety to Venezuela. USCIS recommends that upon publication of the notice of the Venezuela 2023 TPS extension, both existing designations for Venezuela will be under one streamlined filing process, such that all eligible Venezuela TPS beneficiaries – either under the Venezuela 2021 TPS designation or Venezuela 2023 TPS designation – may re-register under the extension and obtain TPS through the same extension date of October 2, 2026.

Attachments:

Attachment A:	Temporary Protected Status Legal Authority
Attachment B:	USCIS Country Conditions Report on TPS for Venezuela
Attachment C:	DOS Recommendation and Country Conditions Report on TPS for Venezuela

EXHIBIT 21

9111-97

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

[CIS No. 2809-25; DHS Docket No. USCIS-2014-0001]

RIN 1615-ZB70

Partial Vacatur of 2024 Temporary Protected Status Decision for Haiti

AGENCY: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

ACTION: Notice of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) partial vacatur.

SUMMARY: Through this notice, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announces that the Secretary of Homeland Security (Secretary) has decided to partially vacate the June 4, 2024 decision of former Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas regarding the extension of the designation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and the new designation of Haiti for TPS. In the 2024 action, former Secretary Mayorkas (1) again extended the designation of Haiti for TPS for the statutory maximum of 18 months (until February 3, 2026), which covered approximately 199,445 Haitian nationals; and (2) again newly designated Haiti for TPS, which had the effect of allowing approximately 321,349 additional Haitian nationals to qualify for the same 18-month period. For the reasons described in this notice, the Secretary has determined to partially vacate the June 4, 2024 decision by reducing the designation period from 18 months to 12 months. The Secretary is also making a corresponding change to the registration deadline for new applicants under the new designation. Accordingly, by operation of this notice, the Haiti TPS extension and

new designation will expire on August 3, 2025 instead of February 3, 2026, and the first-time registration will remain in effect until August 3, 2025 instead of February 3, 2026.

DATES: The partial vacatur is effective immediately.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Samantha Deshommes, Chief, Regulatory Coordination Division, Office of Policy and Strategy, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, 800-375-5283.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Generally

The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) authorizes the Secretary, after consultation with appropriate U.S. Government agencies, to designate a foreign state (or part thereof) for TPS if the Secretary determines that certain country conditions exist.¹ In the case of Haiti, the designation was based on former Secretary Mayorkas' determination that "there exist extraordinary and temporary conditions in [Haiti] that prevent aliens who are nationals of [Haiti] from returning to [Haiti] in safety." Former Secretary Mayorkas, however, failed to evaluate whether "permitting the aliens to remain temporarily in the United States" is not "contrary to the national interest of the United States."²

¹ INA 244(b)(1), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(1). Although section 244(b)(1) of the INA continues to refer to the Attorney General, this authority now resides with the Secretary of Homeland Security by operation of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-296, 116 Stat. 2135, as amended. See, e.g., 6 U.S.C. 557; 8 U.S.C. 1103(a)(1).

² INA 244(b)(1)(C), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(1)(C); see *Extension and Redesignation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 89 FR 54484 (July 1, 2024). The Secretary also may designate a country (or part of a country) for TPS on the basis of (1) an ongoing armed conflict such that returning would pose a serious threat to the personal safety of the country's nationals, or (2) an environmental disaster (including an epidemic) that results in a substantial, but temporary, disruption of living conditions in the affected area and certain other conditions are met. See INA 244(b)(1)(A)-(B), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(1)(A)-(B).

The determination whether to designate any foreign state (or part thereof) for TPS is discretionary, and with respect to an exercise of this discretion, Congress expressly withheld jurisdiction from federal courts such that there is no judicial review of “any determination of the [Secretary] with respect to the designation, or termination or extension of a designation, of a foreign state” for TPS.³ If a country is designated, the Secretary, in the Secretary’s discretion, may then grant TPS to eligible nationals of that foreign state (or individual aliens having no nationality who last habitually resided in the designated foreign state). *See* INA 244(a)(1)(A), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(a)(1)(A). The INA provides that such aliens shall be granted employment authorization, and that such work authorization must be effective throughout the TPS designation period.⁴

At least 60 days before the expiration of a foreign state’s TPS designation or extension, the Secretary, after consultation with appropriate U.S. Government agencies, must review the conditions in the foreign state designated for TPS to determine whether they continue to meet the conditions for the TPS designation. *See* INA 244(b)(3)(A), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(3)(A). If the Secretary determines conditions in the foreign state continue to meet the conditions for TPS designation, the designation will be extended for 6 months or, in the Secretary’s discretion, 12 or 18 months. *See* INA 244(b)(3)(A), (C), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(3)(A), (C). If the Secretary determines that the foreign state no longer meets the conditions for TPS designation, the Secretary must terminate the designation. *See* INA 244(b)(3)(B), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(3)(B).

³ INA 244(b)(5)(A), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(5)(A).

⁴ *See* INA 244(a)(1)(B), (a)(2), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(a)(1)(B), (a)(2).

II. Background

Designations of Haiti for TPS based on “extraordinary and temporary conditions” in that country extend back *15 years*. Haiti was initially designated in January 2010 on the basis of extraordinary and temporary conditions stemming from an earthquake.⁵ DHS estimated at the time that there were 100,000 to 200,000 Haitians in the United States who would be eligible.⁶ Following the initial designation, DHS extended the TPS designation for Haiti and newly designated Haiti based on “extraordinary and temporary conditions” numerous times between 2011 and 2018.⁷

In January 2018, DHS announced the termination of the TPS designation of Haiti effective July 22, 2019.⁸ The termination of Haiti’s TPS designation was challenged in several lawsuits, and preliminary injunctions prevented DHS from implementing the termination of TPS for Haiti pending a final court order.⁹

⁵ See *Designation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 75 FR 3476 (Jan. 21, 2010).

⁶ 75 FR at 3477.

⁷ See *Extension and Redesignation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 76 FR 29000 (May 19, 2011); *Extension of the Designation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 77 FR 59943 (Oct. 1, 2012); *Extension of the Designation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 79 FR 11808 (Mar. 3, 2014); *Extension of the Designation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 80 FR 51582 (Aug. 25, 2015); *Extension of the Designation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 82 FR 23830 (May 24, 2017).

⁸ See *Termination of the Designation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 83 FR 2648 (Jan. 18, 2018).

⁹ See, e.g., Order Granting Motion for Preliminary Injunction dated Oct. 3, 2018, ECF 128, in *Ramos v. Nielsen*, No. 18-cv-01554 (N.D. Cal.); Decision and Order dated Apr. 11, 2019, ECF 155 in *Saget v. Trump*, No. 1:18-cv-1599 (E.D.N.Y.). Both preliminary injunctions were appealed, see *Ramos v. Nielsen*, No. 18-16981 (9th Cir.) and *Saget v. Trump*, No. 19-1685 (2d Cir.), but the appellate proceedings were dismissed after Haiti was newly designated for TPS. See Order dated June 29, 2023, ECF 191, *Ramos v. Nielsen*, No. 18-16981 (9th Cir.); Order on parties’ stipulated dismissal of appeal, dated Oct. 5, 2021, ECF 281, *Saget v. Trump*, No. 19-1685 (2d Cir.). On Dec. 28, 2023, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California dismissed *Ramos v. Nielsen*, No. 18-cv-01554 (N.D. Cal. Dec. 28, 2023), holding that the subsequent TPS designations rendered the litigation moot. See Order Granting Defendants’ Motion to Dismiss dated Dec. 28, 2023, ECF 222, *Ramos v. Nielsen*, No. 18-cv-01554, (N.D. Cal.). On October 15, 2021, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York similarly dismissed the *Saget* case. See Stipulation of Dismissal and Order Dismissing Case dated Oct. 15, 2021, ECF 166, *Saget v. Trump*,

Meanwhile, in August 2021, former Secretary Mayorkas announced that he was newly designating Haiti for 18 months on the basis of “extraordinary and temporary conditions.”¹⁰ Another 18-month extension and new designation was published in February 2023.¹¹ DHS then extended the re-registration period from 60 days to 18 months.¹²

Most recently, in July 2024, DHS issued a notice stating that Secretary Mayorkas once again had determined to extend and newly designate Haiti for TPS for an 18-month period, set to expire on February 3, 2026.¹³ DHS concluded, in summary, that “Haiti is experiencing extraordinary and temporary conditions resulting from grave insecurity and gang crime, as well as socio-economic and humanitarian conditions, including those resulting from environmental disasters aggravating food insecurity.”¹⁴ However, DHS concluded, without any support in the record, that allowing Haitian nationals who would qualify for TPS to remain in the country was not contrary to the national interest, as required by the statute.

Each new designation allowed additional Haitian nationals who entered the United States, including illegally, to qualify even though these populations were not impacted by the preceding

No. 1:18-cv-1599 (E.D.N.Y.). The termination of TPS for Haiti was also challenged in *Centro Presente, et al., v. Biden*, No. 1:18-cv-1-340 (D. Mass.) and *Nat'l Ass'n for the Advancement of Colored People v. Dep't of Homeland Security*, No. 1:18-cv-239 (D. Md.). Claims in those cases were also dismissed following the new designation of TPS for Haiti. See Stipulation of Dismissal dated June 29, 20203, ECF 178, *Centro Presente, et al. v. Biden*, No. 1:18-cv-1-340 (D. Mass.); Order Approving Stipulation of Dismissal dated Nov. 4, 2021, ECF 116, *NAACP v. DHS*, No. 1:18-cv-239 (D. Md.).

¹⁰ See *Designation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 86 FR 41863 (Aug. 3, 2021).

¹¹ See *Extension and Redesignation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 88 FR 5022 (Jan. 26, 2023).

¹² See *Extension of Re-Registration Periods for Extensions of the Temporary Protected Status Designations of El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, and Sudan*, 88 FR 86665 (Dec. 14, 2023).

¹³ See *Extension and Redesignation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 89 FR 54484 (July 1, 2024).

¹⁴ 89 FR at 54491.

findings of “extraordinary and temporary conditions.” In May 2011, DHS estimated that 57,000 Haitians were eligible to register for TPS.¹⁵ In August 2021, DHS estimated that 155,000 Haitians were eligible under that new designation.¹⁶ And by July 2024, the estimate had ballooned to 520,694 (199,445 under the extension, and 321,249 additional aliens under the new designation).¹⁷

Further, former Secretary Mayorkas in 2023 reconsidered and rescinded the first Trump Administration’s decisions to terminate TPS designations for Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Nepal.¹⁸ In the case of El Salvador, Secretary Mayorkas determined – five years after the 2018 termination decision was announced – that “at the time of the decision to terminate TPS, El Salvador continued to experience” certain conditions “that were either insufficiently considered or not considered in the termination decision” and therefore that “[t]he termination decision failed to adequately assess conditions in El Salvador in 2018.”¹⁹ That notice stated that “[a]n agency has inherent (that is, statutorily implicit) authority to revisit its prior decisions unless Congress has expressly limited that authority” and that “[t]he TPS statute does not limit the Secretary’s inherent authority to reconsider any TPS-related determination, and upon

¹⁵ 76 FR at 29002.

¹⁶ 86 FR at 41868.

¹⁷ 89 FR at 54492.

¹⁸ See *Reconsideration and Rescission of Termination of the Designation of El Salvador for Temporary Protected Status; Extension of the Temporary Protected Status Designation for El Salvador*, 88 FR 40282 (June 21, 2023); *Reconsideration and Rescission of Termination of the Designation of Honduras for Temporary Protected Status; Extension of the Temporary Protected Status Designation for Honduras*, 88 FR 40304 (June 21, 2023); *Reconsideration and Rescission of Termination of the Designation of Nicaragua for Temporary Protected Status; Extension of the Temporary Protected Status Designation for Nicaragua*, 88 FR 40294 (June 21, 2023); *Reconsideration and Rescission of Termination of the Designation of Nepal for Temporary Protected Status; Extension of the Temporary Protected Status Designation for Nepal*, 88 FR 40317 (June 21, 2023).

¹⁹ 88 FR at 40287.

reconsideration, to change the determination.”²⁰ DHS did not similarly reconsider and rescind the 2018 decision to terminate the Haiti TPS designation because, as noted, Secretary Mayorkas instead decided to newly designate Haiti.²¹

III. Reconsideration and Partial Vacatur of the 2024 Decision

President Trump underscored in Executive Order 14159, *Protecting the American People Against Invasion*, that enforcing the immigration laws “is critically important to the national security and public safety of the United States.”²² In furtherance of that objective, the President directed the Secretary, along with the Attorney General and Secretary of State, to promptly take all appropriate action, consistent with law, to rescind policies that led to increased or continued presence of illegal aliens in the United States.²³ Among the directed actions are to ensure that the TPS designations are consistent with the TPS statute and “are appropriately limited in scope and made for only so long as may be necessary to fulfill the textual requirements of that statute.”²⁴

The Secretary of Homeland Security accordingly is reconsidering and partially vacating the June 4, 2024 decision of Secretary Mayorkas to extend the Haiti TPS designation and newly designate Haiti for TPS for an additional 18 months (from Aug. 4, 2024 to Feb. 3, 2026). Specifically, the Secretary has determined that the extension and designation period for Haiti should be reduced from the statutory maximum of 18 months to 12 months. Accordingly, by

²⁰ 88 FR at 40285.

²¹ See *Designation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 86 FR 41863 (Aug. 3, 2021).

²² 90 FR 8443, 8443 (Jan. 20, 2025).

²³ 90 FR at 8446.

²⁴ *Id.*

operation of this notice, the Haiti TPS extension and new designation will expire on August 3, 2025 instead of February 3, 2026.

The Secretary is taking this action for several reasons. First, there is no discussion in the July 1, 2024 Federal Register notice of why the 18-month period was selected in lieu of a 6- or 12-month period. Nor does the administrative record underlying the June 3, 2024 decision and July 1, 2024 notice bear any discussion of why the 18-month period was chosen. Allowing aliens from a given country, including aliens who entered the United States illegally or overstayed their authorized period of admission, to remain in the United States temporarily with employment authorization is an extraordinary act. Congress recognized the gravity of such action under the TPS statute by setting the default extension period at 6 months,²⁵ underscoring the uniqueness of this authority,²⁶ and limiting its own authority to enact legislation allowing TPS recipients to adjust to lawful permanent resident status²⁷. Accordingly, determinations of how long a new designation should remain in effect and whether to depart from the default six-month period for an extension of an existing designation should take into account important considerations relating to the purpose of the statute and specific country and country conditions at issue and should not rest alone on administrative convenience. Here, there was no explanation whatsoever of why the 18-month period was selected.

²⁵ See INA 244(b)(3)(C), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(3)(C).

²⁶ See INA 244(g), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(g) (“Except as otherwise specifically provided, this section shall constitute the exclusive authority of the [Secretary of Homeland Security] under law to permit aliens who are or may become otherwise deportable or have been paroled into the United States to remain in the United States temporarily because of their particular nationality or region of foreign state of nationality.”).

²⁷ See INA 244(h), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(h).

Second, and similarly, the July 1, 2024 notice is bereft of any justification of why permitting the ever-increasing population of Haitian TPS recipients, particularly those who entered the country unlawfully, to remain temporarily in the United States is not contrary to the U.S. national interest. The notice simply states that “it is not contrary to the national interest of the United States.” The administrative record underlying Secretary Mayorkas’ June 4, 2024 decision likewise lacks any discussion of the critical national interest criterion. Such conclusory determinations do not accord with the gravity of TPS decisions under the INA. “National interest” is an expansive standard that may encompass an array of broad considerations, including foreign policy, public safety (e.g., potential nexus to criminal gang membership), national security, migration factors (e.g., pull factors), immigration policy (e.g., enforcement prerogatives), and economic considerations (e.g., adverse effects on U.S. workers, impact on U.S. communities).²⁸ Determining whether permitting a class of aliens to remain temporarily in the United States is contrary to the U.S. national interest therefore calls upon the Secretary’s expertise and discretionary judgment, informed by her consultations with appropriate U.S. Government agencies.

Third, although the July 1, 2024 notice cites some country conditions reports that are relatively proximate to the June 4, 2024 decision, several others date back to early 2023, 2022, or

²⁸ See, e.g., *Poursina v. USCIS*, 936 F.3d 868, 874 (9th Cir. 2019) (observing, in an analogous INA context, “that the ‘national interest’ standard invokes broader economic and national-security considerations, and such determinations are firmly committed to the discretion of the Executive Branch—not to federal courts” (citing *Trump v. Hawaii*, 585 U.S. 667, 684-86 (2018)); *Flores v. Garland*, 72 F.4th 85, 89-90 (5th Cir. 2023) (same); *Brasil v. Sec’y, Dep’t of Homeland Sec.*, 28 F.4th 1189, 1193 (11th Cir. 2022) (same); cf. *Matter of D-J-*, 23 I&N Dec. 572, 579-81 (A.G. 2003) (recognizing that taking measures to stem and eliminate possible incentives for potential large-scale migration from a given country—in that case, Haiti—is “sound immigration policy” and an “important national security interest”); *Matter of Dhanasar*, 26 I&N Dec. 884, 890-91 (AAO 2016) (taking into account impact on U.S. workers in “national interest” assessments).

even earlier.²⁹ And certain sources upon which DHS relied indicated that significant developments were taking place in 2024 that might result in an improvement in conditions. For example, as stated in the July 1, 2024 *Federal Register* notice, the United Nations had recently authorized a Multinational Security Support (MSS) mission to deploy in Haiti in 2024 and support the Haitian National Police in capacity building, combatting gang violence, and provide security for critical infrastructure.³⁰ The Department of State likewise underscored that significant development. Thus, both DHS and the Department of State contemplated the real possibility of an improvement in conditions with the deployment of the United Nations MSS mission, yet that important development was not expressly factored into the determination of the length of the extension and designation period.

Eighteen months is the maximum period of designation or extension authorized under the TPS statute. Neither the 2021 new designation, the 2023 extension and new designation, nor the 2024 extension and new designation contained any discussion of national interest considerations or why the 18-month (vs. 6 or 12-month) periods were granted. Given the protracted duration of the “extraordinary and temporary conditions”-based designation for Haiti, the absence of any meaningful appraisal of national interest factors or justification for the 18-month extension, and the fact that eligible Haitians were able to register for TPS under the July 1, 2024 notice for over seven months, the Secretary has determined that a 12-month period is warranted. Abbreviating the period from 18 to 12 months will allow for a fresh review of country conditions in Haiti and of whether such conditions remain both “extraordinary” and “temporary,” whether Haitian may

²⁹ See, e.g., 89 FR at 54888, 54490 (relying on Apr. 2021 report by Harvard Law School, July 2022 report by the International Crisis Group, and Sept. 2021 report by the Council on Foreign Relations).

³⁰ 89 FR at 54490 & nn. 77-79 (citing United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2699 (Oct. 2, 2023)).

return in safety, and whether it is contrary to the U.S. national interest to continue to permit the Haitian nationals to remain temporarily in the United States.

Although the statute allows the Secretary to reassess country conditions – including whether allowing the aliens to remain temporarily in the United States is contrary to the U.S. national interest – at any time at least 60 days before the end of the extension or designation period, the statute does not preclude this more modest action in the interim.³¹ The Secretary intends to conduct a review of current conditions in Haiti and make a new determination in due course.

As the prior Administration concluded, the TPS statute does not limit the Secretary's inherent authority under the INA to reconsider any TPS-related determination, and upon reconsideration, to vacate or amend the determination.³² The Secretary is taking the modest action here of partially vacating the June 4, 2024 decision to reduce the designation and

³¹ See INA 244(b)(3)(A)-(B), 1254a(b)(3)(A)-(B) (providing that the Secretary shall review conditions at least 60 days before the end of the initial period of designation and any extended period of designation).

³² See INA 103(a), 244(b)(3), (b)(5)(A); 8 U.S.C. 1103(a), 1254a(b)(3), (b)(5)(A); *Reconsideration and Rescission of Termination of the Designation of El Salvador for Temporary Protected Status; Extension of the Temporary Protected Status Designation for El Salvador*, 88 FR 40282, 40285 (June 21, 2023) (“An agency has inherent (that is, statutorily implicit) authority to revisit its prior decisions unless Congress has expressly limited that authority. The TPS statute does not limit the Secretary’s inherent authority to reconsider any TPS-related determination, and upon reconsideration, to change the determination.”); see also, e.g., *Ivy Sports Medicine, LLC v. Burwell*, 767 F.3d 81, 86 (D.C. Cir. 2014) (Kavanaugh, J.) (“[A]dministrative agencies are assumed to possess at least some inherent authority to revisit their prior decisions, at least if done in a timely fashion. . . . “[I]nherent authority for timely administrative reconsideration is premised on the notion that the power to reconsider is inherent in the power to decide.” (quotation marks and citations omitted)); *Macktal v. Chao*, 286 F.3d 822, 825-26 (5th Cir. 2002) (“It is generally accepted that in the absence of a specific statutory limitation, an administrative agency has the inherent authority to reconsider its decisions.”) (collecting cases); *Mazaleski v. Treusdel*, 562 F.2d 701, 720 (D.C. Cir. 1977) (“We have many times held that an agency has the inherent power to reconsider and change a decision if it does so within a reasonable period of time.”); cf. *Last Best Beef, LLC v. Dudas*, 506 F.3d 333, 340 (4th Cir. 2007) (agencies possess especially “broad authority to correct their prior errors”).

extension period from 18 months to 12 months and to make a corresponding change to the initial registration period for new applicants under the 2024 new designation.

In taking this action, the Secretary has considered putative reliance interests in Secretary Mayorkas' unreasoned granting of the statutory maximum 18-month period.³³ In particular, as noted, in determining that a 12-month period (vs. 6 months) is warranted, the Secretary considered that Haitians have already been able to register under the July 1, 2024 notice for over seven months. The Secretary also considered potential reliance interests in deciding only to partially vacate the 2024 decision instead of – as Secretary Mayorkas did in 2023 – entirely rescinding or vacating the prior Administration's decision. This action does not alter the 60-day re-registration period permitted for existing beneficiaries under the 2024 extension, which expired on August 30, 2024. And eligible new applicants will still be able to register under the 2024 new designation, but they must now do so by August 3, 2025 instead of February 3, 2026. Moreover, any putative reliance interests arguably engendered by the 18-month, vs. 12-month, designation and extension period are outweighed by the overriding interests and concerns articulated in this notice.

B. Effect of the Vacatur

As a result of the partial vacatur, the 2024 Haiti TPS extension and new designation remains in effect until August 3, 2025, and the initial registration period for new applicants under the 2024 Haiti TPS designation will remain in effect until August 3, 2025. The Secretary, consistent with the statute, intends to review the Haiti TPS designation by June 4, 2025. If she

³³ Because temporary protected status, as the name itself makes clear, is an inherently temporary status and TPS designations are time-limited and subject to agency review, any putative reliance interests of registrants in the Haiti under the Haiti designation merit only diminished weight.

fails to do so, the statute triggers an automatic six-month extension of the current TPS designation.

Pursuant to this partial vacatur, TPS re-registration applications, initial applications, and associated applications for employment authorization filed pursuant to the July 1, 2024 notice that remain pending with USCIS will, if approved, receive an expiration date of August 3, 2025. TPS beneficiaries under the Haiti TPS designation who have already received EADs; Forms 1-797, Notice of Action (Approval Notice); and Forms 1-94, Arrival/Departure Record (collectively known as TPS-related documentation) with a February 3, 2026 expiration date do not need to refile applications with USCIS for new TPS-related documentation showing an August 3, 2025 expiration date. USCIS will not recall TPS-related documentation previously issued with February 3, 2026 expiration dates and those documents remain valid through the new TPS Haiti designation period expiring on August 3, 2025. Additionally, USCIS will not issue new TPS-related documentation with the August 3, 2025 expiration date to aliens who have previously received documentation with the February 3, 2026 expiration date.

Employers and Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies (such as Departments of Motor Vehicles) that previously accepted or are presented with an EAD with the TPS category code of A-12 or C-19 that expires on February 3, 2026 must update their records to note that the validity date of the document is through August 3, 2025.

Aliens who have filed TPS applications pursuant to the July 1, 2024 notice that remain pending with USCIS may also choose to withdraw their TPS applications and request a refund of any filing fees by submitting a signed written withdrawal request to USCIS.

Commented [AE1]: Added this language to provide some direction to employers or benefit-granting agencies. Strongly recommend that OCC and/or VER review this language.

If the decision is to not include this information in the FRN and, rather, update the website with what having an EAD with a later expiration date means, that could be another option. But I want to flag the issue that employers and benefit-granting agencies are not going to know what to do.

Commented [BDK2R1]: Did USCIS OCC and VER confirm accuracy?

IV. Notice of Partial Vacatur of Secretary Mayorkas' 2024 Decision Regarding the Haiti TPS Extension and New Designation

By the authority vested in me as Secretary under sections 103(a) and 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. 1103(a), 1254a, I am vacating in part the decision announced in the July 1, 2024 notice titled *Extension and Redesignation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status*, 89 FR 54484. In doing so, I am (1) amending the period of the extension and designation of Haiti for TPS from 18 months to 12 months, with a new end date of August 3, 2025; and (2) making a corresponding change to the initial registration period for new applicants under the new designation, which now will remain in effect through August 3, 2025. This notice supersedes the July 1, 2024 notice at 89 FR 54484 to the extent modified by this partial vacatur.

Information concerning the TPS designation for Haiti will be available at local USCIS offices upon publication of this notice and through the USCIS National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283. This information will be published on the USCIS website at www.USCIS.gov.


Kristi Noem
Secretary,
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

EXHIBIT 22

From: Unspecified Sender
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 10:34 AM
To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted] Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted] Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]
Cc: Baroukh, Nader [Redacted] Kelliher, Brian [Redacted] GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted] Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted]
Subject: RE: TPS VZ: Final signed version of USCIS Recommendation Memo?

Since we are waiting on DOS anyway, is there a version of the USCIS memo I can review?


From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 10:34 AM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted] Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]
Cc: Baroukh, Nader [Redacted] Kelliher, Brian [Redacted] GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted] Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted]
Subject: TPS VZ: Final signed version of USCIS Recommendation Memo?



Christina E. McDonald


[Redacted]

From: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 9:33 PM
To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted] Kelliher, Brian [Redacted]; GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]
Cc: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]; Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]
Subject: RE: McDonald, Christina (OGC) shared "TPS VZ Termination 2025-01-29 at 226 pm" with you



Thanks,
Sam

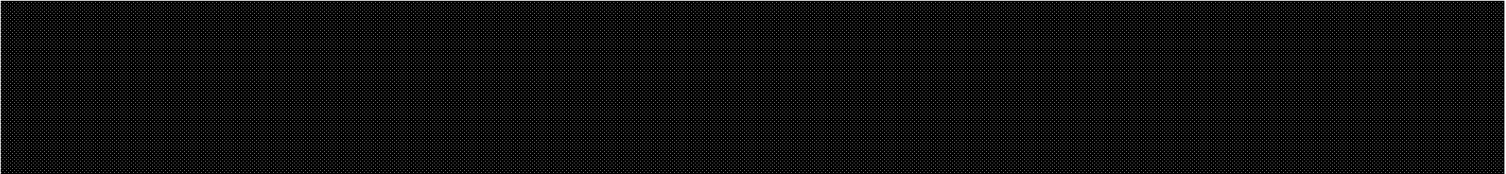
From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 6:15 PM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]; Kelliher, Brian [Redacted];
GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]
Cc: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]; Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]
Subject: RE: McDonald, Christina (OGC) shared "TPS VZ Termination 2025-01-29 at 226 pm" with you



Christina E. McDonald


[Redacted]

From: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 6:08 PM
To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]; Kelliher, Brian [Redacted];
GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]
Cc: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]; Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]
Subject: RE: McDonald, Christina (OGC) shared "TPS VZ Termination 2025-01-29 at 226 pm" with you



Sam

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 5:57 PM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]; Kelliher, Brian [Redacted];
GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]
Cc: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]; Baroukh, Nader [Redacted]
Subject: RE: McDonald, Christina (OGC) shared "TPS VZ Termination 2025-01-29 at 226 pm" with you



Christina E. McDonald

Redacted

From: Deshommes, Samantha L **Redacted**
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 4:21 PM
To: Kelliher, Brian **Redacted**; McDonald, Christina (OGC) **Redacted**
GUNDUZ, IHSAN **Redacted**
Cc: Edlow, Joseph B **Redacted**; Baroukh, Nader **Redacted**
Subject: RE: McDonald, Christina (OGC) shared "TPS VZ Termination 2025-01-29 at 226 pm" with you

Hi All – the OP&S team and SCOPS POC have reviewed and made redline edits to the attached.

@GUNDUZ, IHSAN – is the draft memo that we sent up yesterday ready for me to seek signature on from our Director's Office?

Sam

Samantha Deshommes
(Acting) Chief,
Office of Policy & Strategy
U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services, DHS
Redacted

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From: Kelliher, Brian **Redacted**
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 1:26 PM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L **Redacted**; McDonald, Christina (OGC) **Redacted**
GUNDUZ, IHSAN **Redacted**
Cc: Edlow, Joseph B **Redacted**; Baroukh, Nader **Redacted**
Subject: RE: McDonald, Christina (OGC) shared "TPS VZ Termination 2025-01-29 at 226 pm" with you

Hi Sam. Adding Ihsan.

From: Deshommes, Samantha L **Redacted**
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 12:13 PM
To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) **Redacted**
Cc: Edlow, Joseph B **Redacted**; Kelliher, Brian **Redacted**; Baroukh, Nader **Redacted**
Subject: RE: McDonald, Christina (OGC) shared "TPS VZ Termination 2025-01-29 at 226 pm" with you

Got it; we'll get this back to you. **Are there any edits from HQ on the draft memo we sent up yesterday (to Ihsan)?** If not, we'll finalize the USCIS memo, obtain signature, and have it ready to return along with our redlines of the draft FRN.

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) **Redacted**

Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 12:08 PM

To: Deshommes, Samantha L

Redacted

Cc: Edlow, Joseph B

Redacted

Kelliher, Brian

Redacted

Baroukh, Nader

Redacted

Subject: RE: McDonald, Christina (OGC) shared "TPS VZ Termination 2025-01-29 at 226 pm" with you

Sam:

Joe Edlow asked me to give you permissions last night to the document. The document is an attempt to create a shell and get the project started.

You should connect with Joe to get details on what still needs to be done. (My understanding is that USCIS will be submitting a draft USCIS recommendation memo and a draft FRN to DHS, albeit on a tight timetable due to the impending statutory deadline of Sat Feb 2.)

Christina E. McDonald

Redacted

From: Deshommes, Samantha L

Redacted

Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 11:55 AM

To: McDonald, Christina (OGC)

Redacted

Subject: RE: McDonald, Christina (OGC) shared "TPS VZ Termination 2025-01-29 at 226 pm" with you

Christina – you sent this document to me w/ no background. Would you like me to have OP&S, OCC, and our operational unit (SCOPS) review?

Thank you,

Sam

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC)

Redacted

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 7:42 PM

To: Deshommes, Samantha L

Redacted

Subject: McDonald, Christina (OGC) shared "TPS VZ Termination 2025-01-29 at 226 pm" with you



McDonald, Christina (OGC) invited you to edit a file

Here's the document that McDonald, Christina (OGC) shared with you.



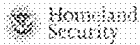
TPS VZ Termination 2025-01-29 at 226 pm



This invite will only work for you and people with existing access.

Open

Share



This email is generated through Department of Homeland Security's use of Microsoft 365 and may contain content that is controlled by Department of Homeland Security.

EXHIBIT 23

From: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 4:33 PM
To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES
[Redacted] Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted]
Baroukh, Nader [Redacted] Kelliher, Brian
[Redacted]
Subject: RE: DOS Letter to DHS - Recommendation to Terminate TPS Designation - Venezuela

Christina, Nader, Brian,
Can one or all of you call me on teams to discuss?

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 4:30 PM
To: PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted] Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted] Baroukh,
Nader [Redacted] Kelliher, Brian [Redacted]
Cc: Edlow, Joseph B [Redacted]
Subject: FW: DOS Letter to DHS - Recommendation to Terminate TPS Designation - Venezuela

DOS sent the attached TPS VZ letter to DHS.
(ESEC send it to USCIS but copied me. I'm copied Edlow here although he will get it through USCIS channels).

Christina E. McDonald

[Redacted]

From: Indyk, Lawrence [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 4:29 PM
To: USCIS Exec Sec [Redacted]
Cc: Internal Team [Redacted] McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Subject: DOS Letter to DHS - Recommendation to Terminate TPS Designation - Venezuela

USICS:

See the attached letter from the Secretary of State to the Secretary of Homeland Security regarding TPS Designation for Venezuela, and please route and handle as appropriate.

Respectfully,
Indy

Lawrence Indyk
DHS-HQ ESEC – Internal Team Lead
Teams: 202-753-0739

[Redacted]

EXHIBIT 24

From: Deshommes, Samantha L. [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 2:03 PM
To: Cutlip-Mason, Rená E. [Redacted]
Subject: Fw: FYI Only - DOS Recommendation to Terminate TPS Designation - Venezuela
Attach: DOS Letter to DHS - Recommendation to Terminate TPS Designation - Venezuela 01.31.2025.pdf

Just sharing...this was apparently rec'd late Friday/early Sat and provided to S1 before the decision deadline.

Samantha Deshommes
 (Acting) Chief,
 Office of Policy & Strategy,
 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, DHS
 [Redacted]

From: Higgins, Jennifer B. [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 11:09:09 AM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L. [Redacted]
Subject: Fw: FYI Only - DOS Recommendation to Terminate TPS Designation - Venezuela
 FYI.

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Kernan, Patrick J. [Redacted] on behalf of DO-Clearance; [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 10:05 AM
To: Davidson, Andrew J. [Redacted]; Higgins, Jennifer B. [Redacted]; Scott, Kika M. [Redacted];
 [Redacted]; Calkins, Aaron L. [Redacted]; Sanchez, Glenday [Redacted]; Edlow, Joseph B. [Redacted]
Cc: DO-Clearance [Redacted]
Subject: FYI Only - DOS Recommendation to Terminate TPS Designation - Venezuela

Good morning,

FYI Only - No Action Required

Please see the attached letter received via DHS ESEC from the Secretary of State to DHS regarding TPS Designation for Venezuela.

Background: DOS has assessed that permitting nationals of Venezuela to remain temporarily in the United States under 8 U.S.C. 1254a is contrary to the national interest of the United States. Accordingly, DOS recommends that S1 terminate the designation of Venezuela pursuant to 8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(3)(A)-(B).

This item has also been shared as an FYI with OP&S and OCC. EXSO will close out the associated STARS item - 91885.

Thanks!

Patrick J. Kernan

Senior Advisor | Office of the Director

EXHIBIT 25

PRE-DECISIONAL/DELIBERATIVE

[Date]

DECISION

MEMORANDUM FROM THE SECRETARY

FROM: Component Head Name
Title

SUBJECT: **Boldfaced; no acronyms in subject; do not underline**

Purpose: Venezuela's designation for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) will expire April 2, 2025. At least 60 days before a TPS designation expires, the Secretary, after consultation with appropriate U.S. Government agencies, is required to review the conditions in a country designated for TPS to determine whether the conditions supporting the designation continue to be met, and, if so, the length of an extension of the designation.¹

TPS Overview: Venezuela has two existing designations for TPS. Venezuela was initially designated for TPS on March 9, 2021 on the basis of extraordinary and temporary conditions that prevented nationals of Venezuela from returning in safety.² The TPS designation was extended for 18 months on September 8, 2022.³ On October 3, 2023, the TPS designation was extended for 18 months and separately redesignated for 18 months⁴ resulting in two separate Venezuela TPS designations. The 2021 designation of Venezuela for TPS (Venezuela 2021) extended TPS through September 10, 2025.⁵ The 2023 designation (Venezuela 2023) extended TPS through April 2, 2025. On January 10, 2025, the 2023 designation of Venezuela for TPS was extended for 18 months, from April 3, 2025, through October 2, 2026.

There are currently approximately 584,700⁶ beneficiaries and approximately 77,500⁷ pending initial applications under Venezuela's TPS designations. Additionally, a small number of individuals have re-registered under the January 10, 2025 extension of the Venezuela 2023 designation and have been issued Employment Authorization Documents with a October 2, 2026 expiration date.

Commented [AE1]: Do not have this data yet.

Description of Country Conditions: Venezuela was initially designated for TPS due to a severe humanitarian emergency marked by an economic contraction, deepening poverty, reduced access to

¹ See Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) sec. 244(b)(3)(A). See also Attachment A: Temporary Protected Status Legal Authority.

² See *Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status and Implementation of Employment Authorization for Venezuelans Covered by Deferred Enforced Departure*, 86 FR 13574 (Mar. 9, 2021).

³ See *Extension of the Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 87 FR 55024 (Sept. 8, 2022).

⁴ See *Extension and Redesignation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 88 FR 68130 (Oct. 3, 2023).

⁵ A review of the conditions supporting the designation of TPS for Venezuela related to Venezuela 2021 is required by July 12, 2025.

⁶ Estimate as of December 5, 2024.

⁷ Estimate as of December 5, 2024.

food and medicine, a collapse in basic services, fuel shortages, human rights abuses and political repression, crime and violence, and increased human mobility and displacement. These conditions persist, but with noted improvements in several areas.

Economy

Sources indicate that Venezuela is experiencing moderate economic recovery and growth following years of financial difficulties.⁸ Venezuela had “an average annual growth of 4% in 2021 to 2023,” according to “an economist at the Venezuelan economic firm, Ecoanalitica.”⁹ Sources also indicate that the Venezuelan government “has had some success in curbing formerly sky-high inflation,” with annual inflation falling “to around 50% over the last year as the government restricted credit, held the exchange rate steady and curbed public spending.”¹⁰ The Maduro government has adopted a series of economic reforms that have led to a “reduction in year-on-year inflation, a recovery of purchasing power, and some improvement in trade.”¹¹

Public Health

There was incremental improvement in the life expectancy of Venezuelans, from 2000 to 2024.¹² The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) highlighted the Venezuelan government’s “efforts to address infectious diseases through sensitization programmes across the national territory and strengthening of epidemiological surveillance capacities.”¹³ OHCHR also mentioned that the “revamping of the vaccination programme, with the support of the United Nations International Child’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), contributed to declaring Venezuela free of measles in November 2023.”¹⁴

Access to Basic Services (including Electricity, Water, & Fuel)

⁸ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela experiences an economic recovery in times of electoral uncertainty, El Pais (Spa.), Jul. 22, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/economy-and-business/2024-07-22/venezuela-experiences-an-economic-recovery-in-times-of-electoral-uncertainty.html> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

⁹ Why Venezuela is no longer in freefall, The Indicator from Planet Money, National Public Radio (NPR), May 8, 2024, available at: <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/1197964529> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹⁰ Mayela Armas, Venezuela inflation has cooled - but voters say they still can't make ends meet, Reuters, Jul. 23, 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuela-inflation-has-cooled-voters-say-they-still-cant-make-ends-meet-2024-07-23/> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹¹ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela grapples with economic collapse, El Pais, Jan. 17, 2025, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2025-01-18/venezuela-grapples-with-economic-collapse.html> (last access Jan. 28, 2025).

¹² Pan American Health Organization, Venezuela – Country Profile, Sept. 24, 2024, available at: <https://hia.paho.org/en/country-profiles/venezuela> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

¹³ Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Jun. 28, 2024, pg. 4, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/situation-human-rights-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-ahrc5663-advance-unedited-version> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹⁴ Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Jun. 28, 2024, pg. 4, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/situation-human-rights-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-ahrc5663-advance-unedited-version> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

Venezuela “experiences regular power outages,”¹⁵ while “interruptions in electrical service” are reportedly “common.”¹⁶ However, reports indicate that in the last six months, power outages have diminished. “Many of the energy problems have subsided as the South American nation’s economy has stabilized, high inflation has eased and a de facto dollarization has reduced shortages of imported goods.”¹⁷

Education

In October 2024, Maduro announced a plan to provide improvements for teachers and the educational system.¹⁸ The plan includes a “digital credit-based purchasing program for acquiring goods, a new healthcare plan, coverage for urban transportation, and a monthly subsidy that includes food bags. Additionally, the country’s network of public schools, which have deteriorated significantly in recent years, will undergo a comprehensive maintenance plan, for which Maduro has requested logistical assistance from the Armed Forces.”¹⁹

Political Crisis

Following the most recent Presidential election in Venezuela in which President Maduro agreed to work toward a democratic election, the U.S. White House granted a permit for Chevron to operate in Venezuela.²⁰

Crime & Insecurity

Venezuela was once considered the most dangerous country in Latin America.²¹ However, “a discernible reduction in the overall levels of violence could be observed” in 2023 and 2024.²² Various factors behind the apparent decline in crime include the country’s “ongoing economic crisis,” which has reportedly reduced “opportunities for extortion and ransom kidnappings,” and led

¹⁵ Venezuela Country Security Report, Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), U.S. Department of State, last updated Mar. 26, 2024, available at: <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Report/34b9e62-2161-412d-bfb-1e752539f6bf> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

¹⁶ Clare Ribando Seelke, Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy, Congressional Research Service (CRS), updated Sep. 1, 2023, pg. 1, available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10230> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

¹⁷ Associate Press, Major power outage hits Venezuela’s capital, with Maduro government blaming ‘sabotage,’ Aug. 30, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-power-outage-b8f12456bdbba9c9e2fb17039ba4cc9> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

¹⁸ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela calls on retired teachers to return to school amid staff shortages, El Pais, Oct. 10, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2024-10-10/venezuela-calls-on-retired-teachers-to-return-to-schools-amid-staff-shortages.html> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

¹⁹ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela calls on retired teachers to return to school amid staff shortages, El Pais, Oct. 10, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2024-10-10/venezuela-calls-on-retired-teachers-to-return-to-schools-amid-staff-shortages.html> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁰ Regina Garcia Cano, US rejects Venezuelan President Maduro’s reelection, but keeps financial lifeline for his government, Associated Press, January 18, 2025, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-maduro-oil-license-chevron-opposition-edmundo-4f61b86da38a46b672090c2155a9b10> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²¹ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²² Annual Report Violence 2023, Venezuelan Violence Observatory (OVV), Dec. 28, 2023, pg. 30, available at: <https://observatoriodeviolencia.org.ve/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/OVV-Violence-in-Venezuela-Annual-Report-2023-.pdf> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024); Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

Venezuelan criminal groups to “infiltrate Venezuelan diasporas settled in other Latin American countries.”²³ The “monopolization of violence in some regions” by “non-state armed groups,” as well as pacts between Maduro representatives and some criminal groups, have also reportedly contributed to improved perceptions of security in certain areas.²⁴

National Interest of the United States

“As of November 2020, more than 5.4 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela” were outside of Venezuela.²⁵ Recent estimates indicate that there are over “7.7 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants worldwide, of which 84% (6.5 million) are in Latin America and the Caribbean.”²⁶ Challenges, such as poor treatment and lack of opportunities, faced by Venezuelan nationals in host countries “have led to an increase in the mass and continuous movements of Venezuelan nationals from one country to the other in search of asylum or settlement.”²⁷ In 2023, at least 328,000 Venezuelans – more than double the previous year – took the treacherous Darién Gap route to Central America; most of them trying to reach the United States.²⁸

This migration phenomenon continues to cause a range of problems in the United States. For example, a Venezuelan gang known as *Tren de Aragua* has successfully projected its power abroad.²⁹ In the United States, the gang has been blamed for sex trafficking, drug smuggling, police shootings, and the exploitation of migrants, and the United States has sanctioned the gang and placed it on a list of transnational criminal organizations.³⁰

Termination Determination

Conditions in Venezuela remain challenging, but notable improvements indicate that the conditions that precipitated the initial TPS designation no longer continue. Venezuela no longer continues to

²³ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²⁴ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²⁵ Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan, January – December 2021, R4V, available at: <https://mrp.r4v.info/mrp2021/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁶ Venezuela Situation, Global Appeal 2024, UNHCR, available at: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/venezuela-situation-global-appeal-2024> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁷ Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 737, available at: https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023_Cap_4B_Venezuela_ENG.PDF (last visited Sep. 4, 2024); Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, Jun. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁸ Gabriela Mesones Rojo, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, June 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁹ InSight Crime, Tren de Aragua, July 12, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/venezuela-organized-crime-news/tren-de-aragua/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

³⁰ Joshua Goodman, Tren de Aragua gang started in Venezuela’s prisons and now spreads fear in the US, Associated Press, Sept. 24, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/tren-de-aragua-gang-venezuela-us-a12c8f9e9d4a0ca73769ea893e09e53> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

meet the statutory requirements for its TPS designation. As such, the statute requires that the TPS designation be terminated. Termination ends TPS benefits for existing Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries. Upon the termination of TPS benefits, former beneficiaries without another immigration status or authorization to remain would no longer have permission to work and remain in the United States. They may, however, apply for any other immigration benefits for which they may be otherwise eligible (e.g., asylum, lawful permanent residence).

Effective Date

The effective date of the termination is [DATE - Note that the effective date of termination may not be earlier than 60 days after the date the *Federal Register* notice announcing the termination is published or, if later, the expiration of the most recent previous extension]. There is no transition or wind-down period, pending applications will not be adjudicated, and current beneficiaries may not apply to extend their employment authorization documentation past the effective date of termination.

EXHIBIT 26

PRE-DECISIONAL/DELIBERATIVE

[Date]

DECISION

MEMORANDUM FROM THE SECRETARY

FROM: Component Head Name
Title

SUBJECT: **Boldfaced; no acronyms in subject; do not underline**

Purpose: Venezuela's designation for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) will expire April 2, 2025. At least 60 days before a TPS designation expires, the Secretary, after consultation with appropriate U.S. Government agencies, is required to review the conditions in a country designated for TPS to determine whether the conditions supporting the designation continue to be met, and, if so, the length of an extension of the designation.¹

As part of the review process, DHS consulted with the Department of State (DOS). On September 24, 2024, DOS provided a country conditions report and written recommendation that the designation of TPS for Venezuela be extended and to redesignate Venezuela for TPS for 18 months. In its recommendation, DOS stated that extraordinary and temporary conditions currently exist in Venezuela that prevent Venezuelan nationals from returning in safety. Additionally, DOS stated that redesignation would demonstrate solidarity with the Venezuelan people and the many Western Hemisphere countries that host Venezuelan refugees and migrants.² DHS notes that the conditions that precipitated the designation of TPS for Venezuela continue; however, there are improvements in several areas.

TPS Overview: Venezuela has two existing designations for TPS. Venezuela was initially designated for TPS on March 9, 2021 on the basis of extraordinary and temporary conditions that prevented nationals of Venezuela from returning in safety, and a finding that it was not contrary to the national interest of the United States to permit Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries to remain in the United States temporarily.³ The TPS designation was extended for 18 months on September 8, 2022.⁴ On October 3, 2023, the TPS designation was extended for 18 months and separately redesignated for 18 months⁵ resulting in two separate Venezuela TPS designations. The 2021

¹ See Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) sec. 244(b)(3)(A). See also Attachment A: Temporary Protected Status Legal Authority.

² See DOS Recommendation and Country Conditions Report on TPS for Venezuela.

³ See *Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status and Implementation of Employment Authorization for Venezuelans Covered by Deferred Enforced Departure*, 86 FR 13574 (Mar. 9, 2021).

⁴ See *Extension of the Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 87 FR 55024 (Sept. 8, 2022).

⁵ See *Extension and Redesignation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 88 FR 68130 (Oct. 3, 2023).

designation of Venezuela for TPS (Venezuela 2021) extended TPS through September 10, 2025.⁶ The 2023 redesignation (Venezuela 2023) provided TPS through April 2, 2025. On January 17, 2025, the 2023 designation of Venezuela for TPS was extended for 18 months, from April 3, 2025, through October 2, 2026. On January 29, 2025, Secretary Noem vacated the January 17, 2025 18-month extension of the 2023 designation of Venezuela for TPS.

There are currently approximately 607,200⁷ beneficiaries, approximately 60,300⁸ pending initial applications, and approximately 20,500⁹ pending re-registration applications under Venezuela's TPS designations. Approximately, 50 re-registration applications that were pending before publication of the January 17, 2025 extension, were adjudicated and issued Employment Authorization Documents with an October 2, 2026 expiration date.

Description of Country Conditions: Venezuela was initially designated for TPS due to a severe humanitarian emergency marked by an economic contraction, deepening poverty, reduced access to food and medicine, a collapse in basic services, fuel shortages, human rights abuses and political repression, crime and violence, and increased human mobility and displacement. These conditions persist, but with noted improvements in several areas.

Economy

While the Venezuelan economy remains in crisis, sources indicate that Venezuela is experiencing moderate economic recovery and growth following years of financial difficulties.¹⁰ Venezuela had "an average annual growth of 4% in 2021 to 2023," according to "an economist at the Venezuelan economic firm, Ecoanalitica."¹¹ Sources also indicate that the Venezuelan government "has had some success in curbing formerly sky-high inflation," with annual inflation falling "to around 50% over the last year as the government restricted credit, held the exchange rate steady and curbed public spending."¹² The Maduro government has adopted a series of economic reforms that have led to a "reduction in year-on-year inflation, a recovery of purchasing power, and some improvement in trade."¹³

Public Health

⁶ A review of the conditions supporting the designation of TPS for Venezuela related to Venezuela 2021 is required by July 12, 2025.

⁷ Estimate as of January 8, 2025.

⁸ Estimate as of January 8, 2025.

⁹ Estimate as of January 8, 2025.

¹⁰ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela experiences an economic recovery in times of electoral uncertainty, El País (Spa.), Jul. 22, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/economy-and-business/2024-07-22/venezuela-experiences-an-economic-recovery-in-times-of-electoral-uncertainty.html> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹¹ Why Venezuela is no longer in freefall, The Indicator from Planet Money, National Public Radio (NPR), May 8, 2024, available at: <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/1197964529> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹² Mayela Armas, Venezuela inflation has cooled - but voters say they still can't make ends meet, Reuters, Jul. 23, 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuela-inflation-has-cooled-voters-say-they-still-cant-make-ends-meet-2024-07-23/> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹³ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela grapples with economic collapse, El País, Jan. 17, 2025, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2025-01-18/venezuela-grapples-with-economic-collapse.html> (last access Jan. 28, 2025).

There was incremental improvement in the life expectancy of Venezuelans, from 2000 to 2024.¹⁴ The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) highlighted the Venezuelan government's "efforts to address infectious diseases through sensitization programmes across the national territory and strengthening of epidemiological surveillance capacities."¹⁵ OHCHR also mentioned that the "revamping of the vaccination programme, with the support of the United Nations International Child's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), contributed to declaring Venezuela free of measles in November 2023."¹⁶

Access to Basic Services (including Electricity, Water, & Fuel)

Venezuela "experiences regular power outages,"¹⁷ while "interruptions in electrical service" are reportedly "common."¹⁸ However, reports indicate that in the last six months, power outages have diminished. "Many of the energy problems have subsided as the South American nation's economy has stabilized, high inflation has eased and a de facto dollarization has reduced shortages of imported goods."¹⁹

Education

In October 2024, Maduro announced a plan to provide improvements for teachers and the educational system.²⁰ The plan includes a "digital credit-based purchasing program for acquiring goods, a new healthcare plan, coverage for urban transportation, and a monthly subsidy that includes food bags. Additionally, the country's network of public schools, which have deteriorated significantly in recent years, will undergo a comprehensive maintenance plan, for which Maduro has requested logistical assistance from the Armed Forces."²¹

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¹⁵ Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Jun. 28, 2024, pg. 4, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/situation-human-rights-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-ahrc5663-advance-unedited-version> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹⁶ Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Jun. 28, 2024, pg. 4, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/situation-human-rights-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-ahrc5663-advance-unedited-version> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹⁷ Venezuela Country Security Report, Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), U.S. Department of State, last updated Mar. 26, 2024, available at: <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Report/34f99e62-2161-412d-bfeb-1e752539f6bf> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

¹⁸ Clare Ribando Seelke, Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy, Congressional Research Service (CRS), updated Sep. 1, 2023, pg. 1, available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10230> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

¹⁹ Associate Press, Major power outage hits Venezuela's capital, with Maduro government blaming 'sabotage,' Aug. 30, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-power-outage-b8f412456bdbba9c9e2fb17039ba4cc9> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁰ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela calls on retired teachers to return to school amid staff shortages, El Pais, Oct. 10, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2024-10-10/venezuela-calls-on-retired-teachers-to-return-to-schools-amid-staff-shortages.html> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

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Crime & Insecurity

Venezuela was once considered the most dangerous country in Latin America.²² However, “a discernible reduction in the overall levels of violence could be observed” in 2023 and 2024.²³ Various factors behind the apparent decline in crime include the country’s “ongoing economic crisis,” which has reportedly reduced “opportunities for extortion and ransom kidnappings,” and led Venezuelan criminal groups to “infiltrate Venezuelan diasporas settled in other Latin American countries.”²⁴ The “monopolization of violence in some regions” by “non-state armed groups,” as well as pacts between Maduro representatives and some criminal groups, have also reportedly contributed to improved perceptions of security in certain areas.²⁵

National Interest of the United States

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This migration phenomenon continues to cause a range of problems in the United States. For example, a Venezuelan gang known as *Tren de Aragua* has successfully projected its power

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²³ Annual Report Violence 2023, Venezuelan Violence Observatory (OVV), Dec. 28, 2023, pg. 30, available at: <https://observatoriodeviolencia.org.ve/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/OVV-Violence-in-Venezuela-Annual-Report-2023-.pdf> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024); Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

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²⁶ Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan, January – December 2021, R4V, available at: <https://rmp.r4v.info/rmp2021/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁷ Venezuela Situation, Global Appeal 2024, UNHCR, available at: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/venezuela-situation-global-appeal-2024> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁸ Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 737, available at:

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²⁹ Gabriela Mesones Rojo, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, June 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

abroad.³⁰ In the United States, the gang has been blamed for sex trafficking, drug smuggling, police shootings, and the exploitation of migrants, and the United States has sanctioned the gang and placed it on a list of transnational criminal organizations.³¹

Termination Determination

Conditions in Venezuela remain challenging, but notable improvements indicate that the conditions that precipitated the initial TPS designation no longer continue. Venezuela no longer continues to meet the statutory requirements for its TPS designation. As such, the statute requires that the TPS designation be terminated.

Additionally, the Secretary has determined that it is contrary to the national interest of the United States to permit Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries to remain in the United States. This determination differs from the DOS recommendation. Due to the increase in encounters at the southwest border and entries of Venezuelan nationals into the United States and the noted criminal activity of some Venezuelan nationals, the Secretary is terminating the TPS designation of Venezuela.

Termination ends TPS benefits for existing Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries. Upon the termination of TPS benefits, former beneficiaries without another immigration status or authorization to remain would no longer have permission to work and remain in the United States. They may, however, apply for any other immigration benefits for which they may be otherwise eligible (e.g., asylum, lawful permanent residence).

Effective Date

The effective date of the termination is [DATE - Note that the effective date of termination may not be earlier than 60 days after the date the *Federal Register* notice announcing the termination is published or, if later, the expiration of the most recent previous extension]. There is no transition or wind-down period, pending applications will not be adjudicated, and current beneficiaries may not apply to extend their employment authorization documentation past the effective date of termination.

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³¹ Joshua Goodman, Tren de Aragua gang started in Venezuela's prisons and now spreads fear in the US, Associated Press, Sept. 24, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/tren-de-aragua-gang-venezuela-us-a12c8fee9dc4a0ca73769ea893e09e53> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

EXHIBIT 27

PRE-DECISIONAL/DELIBERATIVE

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Office of the Director
Camp Springs, MD 20588-0009



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

January 30, 2025

RECOMMENDATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

FROM: Jennifer B. Higgins
Acting Director

SUBJECT: **Recommendation for the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation**

Purpose: Venezuela's designation for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) will expire April 2, 2025. At least 60 days before a TPS designation expires, the Secretary, after consultation with appropriate U.S. Government agencies, is required to review the conditions in a country designated for TPS to determine whether the conditions supporting the designation continue to be met, and, if so, the length of an extension of the designation.¹

As part of the review process, DHS consulted with the Department of State (DOS). On September 24, 2024, DOS provided a country conditions report and written recommendation that the designation of TPS for Venezuela be extended and to redesignate Venezuela for TPS for 18 months. In its recommendation, DOS stated that extraordinary and temporary conditions currently exist in Venezuela that prevent Venezuelan nationals from returning in safety. Additionally, DOS stated that redesignation would demonstrate solidarity with the Venezuelan people and the many Western Hemisphere countries that host Venezuelan refugees and migrants.² DHS notes that the conditions that precipitated the designation of TPS for Venezuela continue; however, there are improvements in several areas.

TPS Overview: Venezuela has two existing designations for TPS. Venezuela was initially designated for TPS on March 9, 2021 on the basis of extraordinary and temporary conditions that prevented nationals of Venezuela from returning in safety, and a finding that it was not contrary to the national interest of the United States to permit Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries to remain in the

¹ See Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) sec. 244(b)(3)(A). See also Attachment A: Temporary Protected Status Legal Authority.

² See DOS Recommendation and Country Conditions Report on TPS for Venezuela.

Recommendation for the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation

Page 2

United States temporarily.³ The TPS designation was extended for 18 months on September 8, 2022.⁴ On October 3, 2023, the TPS designation was extended for 18 months and separately redesignated for 18 months⁵ resulting in two separate Venezuela TPS designations. The 2021 designation of Venezuela for TPS (Venezuela 2021) extended TPS through September 10, 2025.⁶ The 2023 redesignation (Venezuela 2023) provided TPS through April 2, 2025. On January 17, 2025, the 2023 designation of Venezuela for TPS was extended for 18 months, from April 3, 2025, through October 2, 2026. On January 29, 2025, Secretary Noem vacated the January 17, 2025 18-month extension of the 2023 designation of Venezuela for TPS.

There are currently approximately 607,200⁷ beneficiaries, approximately 60,300⁸ pending initial applications, and approximately 20,500⁹ pending re-registration applications under Venezuela's TPS designations. Approximately, 50 re-registration applications that were pending before publication of the January 17, 2025 extension, were adjudicated and issued Employment Authorization Documents with an October 2, 2026 expiration date.

Description of Country Conditions: Venezuela was initially designated for TPS due to a severe humanitarian emergency marked by an economic contraction, deepening poverty, reduced access to food and medicine, a collapse in basic services, fuel shortages, human rights abuses and political repression, crime and violence, and increased human mobility and displacement. These conditions persist, but with noted improvements in several areas.

Economy

While the Venezuelan economy remains in crisis, sources indicate that Venezuela is experiencing moderate economic recovery and growth following years of financial difficulties.¹⁰ Venezuela had “an average annual growth of 4% in 2021 to 2023,” according to “an economist at the Venezuelan economic firm, Ecoanalitica.”¹¹ Sources also indicate that the Venezuelan government “has had some success in curbing formerly sky-high inflation,” with annual inflation falling “to around 50% over the last year as the government restricted credit, held the exchange rate steady and curbed public spending.”¹² The Maduro government has adopted a series of economic reforms that have led to a “reduction in year-on-year inflation, a recovery of purchasing power, and some

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⁴ See *Extension of the Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 87 FR 55024 (Sept. 8, 2022).

⁵ See *Extension and Redesignation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 88 FR 68130 (Oct. 3, 2023).

⁶ A review of the conditions supporting the designation of TPS for Venezuela related to Venezuela 2021 is required by July 12, 2025.

⁷ Estimate as of January 8, 2025.

⁸ Estimate as of January 8, 2025.

⁹ Estimate as of January 8, 2025.

¹⁰ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela experiences an economic recovery in times of electoral uncertainty, *El País* (Spa.), Jul. 22, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/economy-and-business/2024-07-22/venezuela-experiences-an-economic-recovery-in-times-of-electoral-uncertainty.html> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹¹ Why Venezuela is no longer in freefall, *The Indicator* from Planet Money, National Public Radio (NPR), May 8, 2024, available at: <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/1197964529> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹² Mayela Armas, Venezuela inflation has cooled - but voters say they still can't make ends meet, *Reuters*, Jul. 23, 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuela-inflation-has-cooled-voters-say-they-still-cant-make-ends-meet-2024-07-23/> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

Recommendation for the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation

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improvement in trade.”¹³

Public Health

There was incremental improvement in the life expectancy of Venezuelans, from 2000 to 2024.¹⁴ The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) highlighted the Venezuelan government’s “efforts to address infectious diseases through sensitization programmes across the national territory and strengthening of epidemiological surveillance capacities.”¹⁵ OHCHR also mentioned that the “revamping of the vaccination programme, with the support of the United Nations International Child’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), contributed to declaring Venezuela free of measles in November 2023.”¹⁶

Access to Basic Services (including Electricity, Water, & Fuel)

Venezuela “experiences regular power outages,”¹⁷ while “interruptions in electrical service” are reportedly “common.”¹⁸ However, reports indicate that in the last six months, power outages have diminished. “Many of the energy problems have subsided as the South American nation’s economy has stabilized, high inflation has eased and a de facto dollarization has reduced shortages of imported goods.”¹⁹

Education

In October 2024, Maduro announced a plan to provide improvements for teachers and the educational system.²⁰ The plan includes a “digital credit-based purchasing program for acquiring goods, a new healthcare plan, coverage for urban transportation, and a monthly subsidy that includes food bags. Additionally, the country’s network of public schools, which have deteriorated

¹³ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela grapples with economic collapse, El Pais, Jan. 17, 2025, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2025-01-18/venezuela-grapples-with-economic-collapse.html> (last access Jan. 28, 2025).

¹⁴ Pan American Health Organization, Venezuela – Country Profile, Sept. 24, 2024, available at: <https://hia.paho.org/en/country-profiles/venezuela> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

¹⁵ Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Jun. 28, 2024, pg. 4, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/situation-human-rights-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-ahrc5663-advance-unedited-version> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹⁶ Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Jun. 28, 2024, pg. 4, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/situation-human-rights-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-ahrc5663-advance-unedited-version> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹⁷ Venezuela Country Security Report, Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), U.S. Department of State, last updated Mar. 26, 2024, available at: <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Report/34f99e62-2161-412d-bfeb-1e752539f6bf> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

¹⁸ Clare Ribando Seelke, Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy, Congressional Research Service (CRS), updated Sep. 1, 2023, pg. 1, available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10230> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

¹⁹ Associate Press, Major power outage hits Venezuela’s capital, with Maduro government blaming ‘sabotage,’ Aug. 30, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-power-outage-b8f412456bdbba9c9e2fb17039ba4cc9> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁰ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela calls on retired teachers to return to school amid staff shortages, El Pais, Oct. 10, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2024-10-10/venezuela-calls-on-retired-teachers-to-return-to-schools-amid-staff-shortages.html> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

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significantly in recent years, will undergo a comprehensive maintenance plan, for which Maduro has requested logistical assistance from the Armed Forces.”²¹

Crime & Insecurity

Venezuela was once considered the most dangerous country in Latin America.²² However, “a discernible reduction in the overall levels of violence could be observed” in 2023 and 2024.²³ Various factors behind the apparent decline in crime include the country’s “ongoing economic crisis,” which has reportedly reduced “opportunities for extortion and ransom kidnappings,” and led Venezuelan criminal groups to “infiltrate Venezuelan diasporas settled in other Latin American countries.”²⁴ The “monopolization of violence in some regions” by “non-state armed groups,” as well as pacts between Maduro representatives and some criminal groups, have also reportedly contributed to improved perceptions of security in certain areas.²⁵

National Interest of the United States

“As of November 2020, more than 5.4 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela” were outside of Venezuela.²⁶ Recent estimates indicate that there are over “7.7 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants worldwide, of which 84% (6.5 million) are in Latin America and the Caribbean.”²⁷ Challenges, such as poor treatment and lack of opportunities, faced by Venezuelan nationals in host countries “have led to an increase in the mass and continuous movements of Venezuelan nationals from one country to the other in search of asylum or settlement.”²⁸ In 2023, at least 328,000 Venezuelans – more than double the previous year – took the treacherous Darién Gap route to Central America; most of them trying to reach the United States.²⁹

²¹ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela calls on retired teachers to return to school amid staff shortages, El Pais, Oct. 10, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2024-10-10/venezuela-calls-on-retired-teachers-to-return-to-schools-amid-staff-shortages.html> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²² Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²³ Annual Report Violence 2023, Venezuelan Violence Observatory (OVV), Dec. 28, 2023, pg. 30, available at: <https://observatoriodeviolencia.org.ve/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/OVV-Violence-in-Venezuela-Annual-Report-2023-.pdf> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024); Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²⁴ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²⁵ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²⁶ Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan, January – December 2021, R4V, available at: <https://rmrp.r4v.info/rmrp2021/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁷ Venezuela Situation, Global Appeal 2024, UNHCR, available at: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/venezuela-situation-global-appeal-2024> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁸ Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 737, available at:

https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023_Cap_4B_Venezuela_ENG.PDF (last visited Sep. 4, 2024); Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, Jun. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁹ Gabriela Mesones Rojo, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, June 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

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This migration phenomenon continues to cause a range of problems in the United States. For example, a Venezuelan gang known as *Tren de Aragua* has successfully projected its power abroad.³⁰ In the United States, the gang has been blamed for sex trafficking, drug smuggling, police shootings, and the exploitation of migrants, and the United States has sanctioned the gang and placed it on a list of transnational criminal organizations.³¹

Termination Determination

Conditions in Venezuela remain challenging, but notable improvements indicate that the conditions that precipitated the initial TPS designation no longer continue. Venezuela no longer continues to meet the statutory requirements for its TPS designation. As such, the statute requires that the TPS designation be terminated.

Additionally, USCIS believes that it may be contrary to the national interest of the United States to permit Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries to remain in the United States. This determination differs from the DOS recommendation. Due to the increase in encounters at the southwest border and entries of Venezuelan nationals into the United States and the noted criminal activity of some Venezuelan nationals, we recommend the Secretary terminate the TPS designation of Venezuela.

Termination ends TPS benefits for existing Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries. Upon the termination of TPS benefits, former beneficiaries without another immigration status or authorization to remain would no longer have permission to work and remain in the United States. They may, however, apply for any other immigration benefits for which they may be otherwise eligible (e.g., asylum, lawful permanent residence).

Effective Date

The effective date of the termination may not be earlier than 60 days after the date the *Federal Register* notice announcing the termination is published or, if later, the expiration of the most recent previous extension. There is no transition or wind-down period, pending applications will not be adjudicated, and current beneficiaries may not apply to extend their employment authorization documentation past the effective date of termination.

³⁰ InSight Crime, *Tren de Aragua*, July 12, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/venezuela-organized-crime-news/tren-de-aragua/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

³¹ Joshua Goodman, *Tren de Aragua gang started in Venezuela's prisons and now spreads fear in the US*, Associated Press, Sept. 24, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/tren-de-aragua-gang-venezuela-us-a12c8fcc9dc4a0ca73769ea893c09c53> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

EXHIBIT 28

From: Cutlip-Mason, Rená E [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 10:56 AM
To: Ezeldin, Amany S [REDACTED] Block, Andrew J
[REDACTED] Ridley, Sasha M [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Venezuela TPS

Hi all,

Can you start to dig into these questions? Thanks, Rená

Rená (Ruh-NAY) E. Cutlip-Mason

Phone [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

From: GUNDUZ, IHSAN [REDACTED] **Redacted**

Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 10:55 AM

To: Cutlip-Mason, Rená E [REDACTED] Ridley, Sasha M [REDACTED]

Cc: McGuinness, Dawn [REDACTED]

Subject: Venezuela TPS

Hi Rena and Sasha,

Secretary's office is requesting below information on Venezuela by the end of the day tomorrow to make a decision on Venezuela TPS by Friday. Can your team please provide this information? Thanks

TPS designations for Venezuela:

1. What were migration patterns for Venezuelans after S1 designated Venezuela for TPS in 2021?
2. What is the inter-relationship between the Columbia Honduras Nicaragua Venezuela (CHNV) Parole Processes and TPS? For example, how many CHNV (VZ specifically) parolees later transferred to TPS?
3. Information on violence in Venezuela, such as gang violence.
4. The impact of TPS in Latin America and whether it is a pull factor.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks!

Ihsan Gunduz

Director, Border Security and Immigration Policy

Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans | Department of Homeland Security
[REDACTED]

EXHIBIT 29

From: Unspecified Sender
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 2:15 PM
To: Tanner, Rebecca S [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Venezuela TPS

FYI – just seeing this after reviewing emails

Emma K. Krichinsky (she/her/هي) | Chief | Research Branch | STAR Division | RAIO Directorate
Mobile: [REDACTED] About RAIO Research | Research News Summary Bulletin

From: Ezeldin, Amany S [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 11:05 AM
To: Krichinsky, Emmarie K (Emma) [REDACTED]
Cc: Block, Andrew J [REDACTED]; Ridley, Sasha M [REDACTED]; Tanner, Rebecca S [REDACTED]; Perkowski, Thomas E [REDACTED]
Subject: Venezuela TPS

Hi Emma,

We received a question from DHS on Venezuela that we could use your help on, if possible. It is a very short turnaround (end of day tomorrow).

1. What were migration patterns for Venezuelans after S1 designated Venezuela for TPS in 2021?
2. The impact of TPS in Latin America and whether it is a pull factor.

I'm not sure we can actually answer #2 without a significant study, but adding in the question in case it's something that has come up in research. I've looped in Tom, but not sure if that's appropriate.

Thanks,
Amany

Amany Ezeldin (she/her)
Policy Analyst, Humanitarian Affairs Division (HAD)
Office of Policy and Strategy (OP&S), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
[REDACTED]

EXHIBIT 30

TPS designations for Venezuela:

1) What were migration patterns for Venezuelans after S1 designated Venezuela for TPS in 2021?

Formerly a country that “welcomed Europeans fleeing war and Colombians escaping a bloody internal conflict,”¹ Venezuela is facing “one of the largest displacement crises in the world.”² “As of November 2020, more than 5.4 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela” were outside of Venezuela.³ Recent estimates indicate that there are over “7.7 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants worldwide, of which 84% (6.5 million) are in Latin America and the Caribbean.”⁴

“The roots of the Venezuelan migration crisis are deeply embedded in the country’s economic collapse. A pivotal moment occurred in 2015, following the decline in oil prices that plunged Venezuela into a profound recession.”⁵ Since that time, migration out of Venezuela has continued. One researcher provides information on three key phases in the demographics of Venezuelan emigration as they are linked to the various stages of the migration crisis – 1) The onset of the crisis (2014-2017), 2) Acute phase of the crisis (2018-2020), and 3) Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (2021).⁶ Sources indicate that factors within Venezuela fueled the emigration crisis. Information on migration patterns as they may relate to a TPS designation are not available.

As noted above, the vast majority of Venezuelan refugees and migrants are in Latin America and the Caribbean. Most Venezuelan migrants and refugees have “moved to other Latin American countries where they often live in poor conditions due to lack of opportunities and mounting xenophobia.”⁷

¹ Regina Garcia Cano, Many couples in troubled Venezuela are breaking up as people make plans to migrate ahead of election, The Associated Press, Jul. 18, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-election-maduro-economy-crisis-relations-hips-love-a2ccff116ea52ea742e03ebcd294dbd3> (last visited Jan. 28, 2025).

² Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, Jun. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Jan. 28, 2025).

³ Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan, January – December 2021, R4V, available at: <https://rmrp.r4v.info/rmrp2021/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

⁴ Venezuela Situation, Global Appeal 2024, UNHCR, available at: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/venezuela-situation-global-appeal-2024> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

⁵ Jenny Garcia Arias, The crisis-driven shifts of Venezuelan migration patterns, NIUSSP, Sept. 12, 2024, available at: <https://www.niussp.org/migration-and-foreigners/the-crisis-driven-shifts-of-venezuelan-migration-patterns/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

⁶ Jenny Garcia Arias, The crisis-driven shifts of Venezuelan migration patterns, NIUSSP, Sept. 12, 2024, available at: <https://www.niussp.org/migration-and-foreigners/the-crisis-driven-shifts-of-venezuelan-migration-patterns/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

⁷ Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, Jun. 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Jan. 28, 2025).

Reportedly, challenges faced by Venezuelan nationals in host countries “have led to an increase in the mass and continuous movements of Venezuelan nationals from one country to the other in search of asylum or settlement.”⁸

Despite these challenges, several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have or continue to establish new or expanded legal stay arrangements and temporary protection for Venezuelans.⁹ More than 1.9 million of the 2.9 million Venezuelans in Colombia have received temporary protection permits, and in June 2024, a new process was announced to provide legal residency to an additional 600,000 people.¹⁰ Peru, the second destination country for Venezuelans after Colombia, hosts the largest number of Venezuelan asylum-seekers worldwide and is improving its asylum system.¹¹ Additionally, neighboring countries have stood up new processes and programs to address the growing Venezuelan populations. In May 2024, Ecuador announced a new regularization process, Brazil recognized over 132,000 Venezuelans as refugees and granted over 411,000 temporary residency permits, and Uruguay adopted two programs to provide legal solutions for Venezuelans.¹² In September 2024, Argentina announced a new regularization process to benefit Venezuelan nationals.¹³

2) What is the inter-relationship between the CHNV parole process and TPS? For example, how many CHNV (VZ specifically) parolees later transferred to TPS?

3) Information on violence in Venezuela, such as gang violence.

Venezuela was once considered the most dangerous country in Latin America.¹⁴ However, “a discernible reduction in the overall levels of violence could be observed” in

⁸ Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 737, available at: https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023_Cap_4B_Venezuela_ENG.PDF (last visited Sep. 4, 2024).

⁹ UNHCR, Global Focus, Venezuela Situation, available at: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/situations/venezuela-situation#:~:text=More%20than%201.9%20million%20of,to%20an%20additional%20600%2C000%20people>. (last visited Jan. 2, 2025).

¹⁰ UNHCR, Global Focus, Venezuela Situation, available at: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/situations/venezuela-situation#:~:text=More%20than%201.9%20million%20of,to%20an%20additional%20600%2C000%20people>. (last visited Jan. 2, 2025).

¹¹ ReliefWeb, Peru: Fact Sheet, August 2024, available at: [https://reliefweb.int/report/peru/peru-factsheet-august-2024#:~:text=Peru%20hosts%20the%20largest%20number,\(over%20one%20million%20people\)](https://reliefweb.int/report/peru/peru-factsheet-august-2024#:~:text=Peru%20hosts%20the%20largest%20number,(over%20one%20million%20people)). (last visited Jan. 2, 2025).

¹² UNHCR, Global Focus, Venezuela Situation, available at: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/situations/venezuela-situation#:~:text=More%20than%201.9%20million%20of,to%20an%20additional%20600%2C000%20people>. (last visited Jan. 2, 2025).

¹³ UNHCR, Global Focus, Venezuela Situation, available at: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/situations/venezuela-situation#:~:text=More%20than%201.9%20million%20of,to%20an%20additional%20600%2C000%20people>. (last visited Jan. 2, 2025).

¹⁴ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela's Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

2023 and 2024.¹⁵ Various factors behind the apparent decline in crime include the country's "ongoing economic crisis," which has reportedly reduced "opportunities for extortion and ransom kidnappings," and led Venezuelan criminal groups to "infiltrate Venezuelan diasporas settled in other Latin American countries."¹⁶ The "monopolization of violence in some regions" by "non-state armed groups," as well as pacts between Maduro representatives and some criminal groups, have also reportedly contributed to improved perceptions of security in certain areas.¹⁷

Nevertheless, Venezuelans continue to "face physical insecurity and violence from several sources, including irregular armed groups, security forces, and organized gangs."¹⁸ The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) reported that "Criminal armed groups often operate with the cooperation, or tolerance of state security forces" in Venezuela.¹⁹ Moreover, security forces in Venezuela have been "accused of committing human rights abuses such as torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, including sexual and gender-based violence, and killings consistent with extrajudicial executions."²⁰

Freedom House has reported that "Venezuelans face physical insecurity and violence from several sources, including irregular armed groups, security forces, and organized gangs."²¹ In November 2023, EUAA reported that various armed groups operated in the country.²²

¹⁵ Annual Report Violence 2023, Venezuelan Violence Observatory (OVV), Dec. 28, 2023, pg. 30, available at: <https://observatoriodeviolencia.org.ve/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/OVV-Violence-in-Venezuela-Annual-Report-2023-.pdf> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024); Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela's Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

¹⁶ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela's Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

¹⁷ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela's Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

¹⁸ Freedom in the World 2024 – Venezuela, Freedom House, Feb. 29, 2024, available at: <https://freedomhouse.org/country/venezuela/freedom-world/2024> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

¹⁹ Venezuela - Country Focus, European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), Nov. 2023, pg. 42, available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2023_11_EUAA_COI_Report_Venezuela_Country_Focus.pdf (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²⁰ Venezuela - Country Focus, European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), Nov. 2023, pg. 26, available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2023_11_EUAA_COI_Report_Venezuela_Country_Focus.pdf (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²¹ Freedom in the World 2024 – Venezuela, Freedom House, Feb. 29, 2024, available at: <https://freedomhouse.org/country/venezuela/freedom-world/2024> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²² Venezuela - Country Focus, European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), Nov. 2023, pg. 41, available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2023_11_EUAA_COI_Report_Venezuela_Country_Focus.pdf (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

The European Union Agency for Asylum also reported that “Criminal armed groups often operate with the cooperation, or tolerance of state security forces” in Venezuela.²³ In late July 2024, InSight Crime noted that Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro “presides over a criminal hybrid state, where he relies on criminal actors in what is a symbiotic relationship. He allows certain criminal groups to operate, unmolested and even supported on Venezuelan territory, in return for these groups sharing criminal proceeds with loyal political and military actors and crushing political opposition in their areas of influence.”²⁴

4) The impact of TPS in Latin America and whether it is a pull factor.

²³ Venezuela - Country Focus, European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), Nov. 2023, pg. 42, available at: https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2023_11_EUAA_COI_Report_Venezuela_Country_Focus.pdf (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²⁴ Jeremy McDermott, Predictions for Venezuela's Post-Election Criminal Landscape, InSight Crime, Jul. 29, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/predictions-criminal-landscape-after-venezuelas-election/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

EXHIBIT 31

From: Ezeldin, Amany S <[Redacted]> [Redacted]
[Redacted]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 11:01 AM
To: Cutlip-Mason, Rená E [Redacted] Block, Andrew J [Redacted]
[Redacted] Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Venezuela TPS

Thanks Rená. Some initial thoughts as we get started:

TPS designations for Venezuela:

1. What were migration patterns for Venezuelans after S1 designated Venezuela for TPS in 2021? This requires research that we don't have access to. We had asked for similar information from RAIO research in response to a DO question in the draft memo, and they don't have anything like that ready. We can reach out to ask for their help, but I'm not sure there will be a fulsome answer by the deadline. I'll reach out to RAIO now.
2. What is the inter-relationship between the Columbia Honduras Nicaragua Venezuela (CHNV) Parole Processes and TPS? For example, how many CHNV (VZ specifically) parolees later transferred to TPS? Will request from OPQ
3. Information on violence in Venezuela, such as gang violence.
4. The impact of TPS in Latin America and whether it is a pull factor. This also requires significant research. Not sure that is something that can be fully responded to by the deadline. As you know, there were studies conducted a few years ago, but they weren't very conclusive.

From: Cutlip-Mason, Rená E [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 7:56 AM
To: Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted] Block, Andrew J [Redacted] Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted]
Subject: FW: Venezuela TPS

Hi all,

Can you start to dig into these questions? Thanks, Rená

Rená (Ruh-NAY) E. Cutlip-Mason
[Redacted]

From: GUNDUZ, IHSAN [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 10:55 AM
To: Cutlip-Mason, Rená E [Redacted] Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted]
Cc: McGuinness, Dawn [Redacted]
Subject: Venezuela TPS

Hi Rena and Sasha,

Secretary's office is requesting below information on Venezuela by the end of the day tomorrow to make a decision on Venezuela TPS by Friday. Can your team please provide this information? Thanks

TPS designations for Venezuela:

1. What were migration patterns for Venezuelans after S1 designated Venezuela for TPS in 2021?
2. What is the inter-relationship between the Columbia Honduras Nicaragua Venezuela (CHNV) Parole Processes and TPS? For example, how many CHNV (VZ specifically) parolees later transferred to TPS?
3. Information on violence in Venezuela, such as gang violence.
4. The impact of TPS in Latin America and whether it is a pull factor.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks!


Ihsan Gunduz
Director, Border Security and Immigration Policy
Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans | Department of Homeland Security


EXHIBIT 32



24/7 Live

71°

U.S. & WORLD

Trump slams Haitians attempting to enter U.S., says they 'probably have AIDS'



Sunday, October 10, 2021



Former President Trump made baseless remarks about Haitians trying to enter the United States, saying most of them "probably have AIDS."

Former President Donald Trump baselessly slammed Haitian migrants who are trying to enter the United States, saying hundreds of thousands are flowing in and "probably have AIDS."

"Take a look at what's happening in Haiti. A tremendous problem with AIDS," he said in a recent interview with Fox News.

"Many of those people will probably have AIDS and they're coming into our country and we don't do anything about it. We let everybody come in. It's like a death wish for our country."

This is not the first time the former president made disparaging comments about Haiti. In 2018, he reportedly made profane and disparaging remarks about Haiti and African nations.

HIV among Haitians age 15 to 49 is just under 2% and Haiti's HIV prevalence rate has declined significantly in recent decades, according to the United Nations.

Tens of thousands of Haitians have been trying to enter the United States in recent months through the Texas border with Mexico. The island nation is facing increased violence and political turmoil following the assassination of the president in July and a powerful earthquake in August.

The United States recently deported about 7,000 Haitians.



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EXHIBIT 33



From: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 10:36 AM
To: Vagle, Ruhee V [Redacted]; Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted];
 [Redacted] Cutlip-Mason, Rená E [Redacted];
 [Redacted] Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted] Block,
 Andrew J [Redacted] Salazar, Carly L
 [Redacted] Noncent, Karine A [Redacted]
Cc: El-Hage, Rabia S [Redacted]
Subject: RE: AD1 passback: TPS Ven Recommendation memo - Needs EXSO Formatting and AD1 Signature

Received, thank you.

From: Vagle, Ruhee V [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 9:30 AM
To: Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted]; Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted];
 [Redacted] Cutlip-Mason, Rená E [Redacted] Ezeldin, Amany
 [Redacted] Block, Andrew J [Redacted] Salazar, Carly L
 [Redacted] Noncent, Karine A [Redacted]
Cc: El-Hage, Rabia S [Redacted]
Subject: RE: AD1 passback: TPS Ven Recommendation memo - Needs EXSO Formatting and AD1 Signature

Good Morning,

Please see the two attachments as requested:

1. Redline Version:  Venezuela memo 20250130.docx
2. Clean Version:  Venezuela memo 20250131 Clean.docx

Warmly,
 Ruhee

From: Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 7:57 AM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]; Cutlip-Mason, Rená E [Redacted];
 [Redacted] Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted] Block, Andrew J
 [Redacted] Vagle, Ruhee V [Redacted] Salazar, Carly L
 [Redacted] Noncent, Karine A [Redacted]
Subject: Re: AD1 passback: TPS Ven Recommendation memo - Needs EXSO Formatting and AD1 Signature

Hi Sam we will. @Salazar, Carly L @Vagle, Ruhee V can you take a look? I will also. Thanks!

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Deshommes, Samantha [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 8:26:39 PM
To: Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted]; Cutlip-Mason, Rená E [Redacted];
 Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted] Block, Andrew J [Redacted] Vagle, Ruhee V
 [Redacted] Salazar, Carly L [Redacted] Noncent, Karine A
 [Redacted]

Subject: AD1 passback: TPS Ven Recommendation memo - Needs EXSO Formatting and AD1 Signature

Hi Team,

By 10 am, can you please provide me with a redline and clean version addressing the attached passback. I reviewed and think this can be addressed fairly quickly, but please let me know if we should discuss. Btw, we can definitely delete the mention of the cases that were adjudicated since Jan 17th since AD1 is concerned with that.

Thank you so much!

Sam

Samantha Deshommes
(Acting) Chief,
Office of Policy & Strategy,
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, DHS

Redacted

From: Sanchez, Glendaly [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 7:56:49 PM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted] Dumas, Jessica L
[Redacted]
Cc: Scott, Kika M <[Redacted]>; Calkins, Aaron L [Redacted]
Subject: RE: URGENT (sorry): TPS Venezuelan Recommendation memo - Needs EXSO Formatting and AD1 Signature

Hi Sam,

Please address AD1's edits in the attached and return an updated version as soon as possible for her signature.

Thanks,

Glendaly Sanchez
Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations
Office of the Director

Redacted

From: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 5:12 PM
To: Dumas, Jessica L [Redacted] Sanchez, Glendaly [Redacted]
Cc: Scott, Kika M <[Redacted]>; Calkins, Aaron L [Redacted]
Subject: RE: URGENT (sorry): TPS Venezuelan Recommendation memo - Needs EXSO Formatting and AD1 Signature

Really appreciate it, Jessica.

From: Dumas, Jessica L [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 5:12 PM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted] Sanchez, Glendaly
[Redacted]
Cc: Scott, Kika M <[Redacted]>; Calkins, Aaron L [Redacted]
Subject: RE: URGENT (sorry): TPS Venezuelan Recommendation memo - Needs EXSO Formatting and AD1 Signature

Hi Sam,

I am waiting for the attachment to download but I will get this together now and send it over for signature.

Thanks,

Jessica

From: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 5:10 PM
To: Sanchez, Glendaly [Redacted]; Dumas, Jessica L [Redacted]
Cc: Scott, Kika M <[Redacted]>; Calkins, Aaron L [Redacted]
Subject: URGENT (sorry): TPS Venezuelan Recommendation memo - Needs EXSO Formatting and AD1 Signature
Importance: High

Hi there,

I apologize in advance for the 5 pm flash/urgent message. We just received clearance on the attached from the Department. I'm sending this to you for formatting and AD1 Higgins' signature. We need to get this back over to the Department ASAP (again, sorry for the rush).

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Sam

Samantha Deshommes
(Acting) Chief,
Office of Policy & Strategy
U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services, DHS
[Redacted]

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EXHIBIT 34

PRE-DECISIONAL/DELIBERATIVE

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Office of the Director
Camp Springs, MD 20588-0009



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

January 30, 2025

RECOMMENDATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

FROM: Jennifer B. Higgins
Acting Director

SUBJECT: **Recommendation for the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation**

Purpose: Venezuela's designation for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) will expire April 2, 2025. At least 60 days before a TPS designation expires, the DHS Secretary, after consultation with appropriate U.S. Government agencies, is required to review the conditions in a country designated for TPS to determine whether the conditions supporting the designation continue to be met.¹

As part of the review process, DHS consulted with the Department of State (DOS). On September 24, 2024, DOS provided a country conditions report and written recommendation that the designation of TPS for Venezuela be extended and to redesignate Venezuela for TPS for 18 months. In its recommendation, DOS stated that extraordinary and temporary conditions currently exist in Venezuela that prevent Venezuelan nationals from returning in safety. Additionally, DOS stated that redesignation would demonstrate solidarity with the Venezuelan people and the many Western Hemisphere countries that host Venezuelan refugees and migrants.² DHS notes that the conditions that precipitated the designation of TPS for Venezuela continue; however, there are improvements in several areas.

TPS Overview:

- Venezuela has two existing designations for TPS.
- Venezuela was initially designated for TPS on March 9, 2021 on the basis of extraordinary and temporary conditions that prevented nationals of Venezuela from returning in safety,

¹ See Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) sec. 244(b)(3)(A). See also Attachment A: Temporary Protected Status Legal Authority.

² See DOS Recommendation and Country Conditions Report on TPS for Venezuela.

Commented [111]: Temporary Protected Status

Recommendation for the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation

Page 2

and a finding that it was not contrary to the national interest of the United States to permit Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries to remain in the United States temporarily.³

- The TPS designation was extended for 18 months on September 8, 2022.⁴
- On October 3, 2023, the TPS designation was extended for 18 months and separately redesignated for 18 months⁵ resulting in two separate Venezuela TPS designations.
 - The 2021 designation of Venezuela for TPS (Venezuela 2021) extended TPS through September 10, 2025.⁶ The 2023 redesignation (Venezuela 2023) provided TPS through April 2, 2025.
 - On January 17, 2025, the 2023 designation of Venezuela for TPS was extended for 18 months, from April 3, 2025, through October 2, 2026.
- On January 29, 2025, Secretary Noem vacated the January 17, 2025 18-month extension of the 2023 designation of Venezuela for TPS.

Formatted**Formatted:** List Paragraph, Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.25" + Indent at: 0.5"**Commented [JH2]:** This should be a chart or a bulleted list with Venezuela's first designation and the relevant extensions and Venezuela's second designation and the relevant extensions. This is too confusing as is.**Commented [SR3R2]:** We have made this into bullets for better readability.**Formatted:** List Paragraph, Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.25" + Indent at: 0.5"**Commented [JH4]:** Why do we need to highlight this?**Commented [SR5R4]:** Will be deleted.

There are currently approximately 607,200⁷ beneficiaries, approximately 60,300⁸ pending initial applications, and approximately 20,500⁹ pending re-registration applications under both of Venezuela's TPS designations. ~~Approximately 50 re-registration applications that were pending before publication of the January 17, 2025 extension, were adjudicated and issued Employment Authorization Documents with an October 2, 2026 expiration date.~~

Description of Country Conditions: Venezuela was initially designated for TPS due to a severe humanitarian emergency marked by an economic contraction, deepening poverty, reduced access to food and medicine, a collapse in basic services, fuel shortages, human rights abuses and political repression, crime and violence, and increased human mobility and displacement. These conditions persist, but with noted improvements in several areas.

Economy

While the Venezuelan economy remains in crisis, sources indicate that Venezuela is experiencing moderate economic recovery and growth following years of financial difficulties.¹⁰ Venezuela had "an average annual growth of 4% in 2021 to 2023," according to "an economist at the Venezuelan economic firm, Ecoanalitica."¹¹ Sources also indicate that the Venezuelan government "has had some success in curbing formerly sky-high inflation," with annual inflation falling "to around 50%

³ See *Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status and Implementation of Employment Authorization for Venezuelans Covered by Deferred Enforced Departure*, 86 FR 13574 (Mar. 9, 2021).

⁴ See *Extension of the Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 87 FR 55024 (Sept. 8, 2022).

⁵ See *Extension and Redesignation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 88 FR 68130 (Oct. 3, 2023).

⁶ A review of the conditions supporting the designation of TPS for Venezuela related to Venezuela 2021 is required by July 12, 2025.

⁷ Estimate as of January 8, 2025.

⁸ Estimate as of January 8, 2025.

⁹ Estimate as of January 8, 2025.

¹⁰ Alonso Moleiro, *Venezuela experiences an economic recovery in times of electoral uncertainty*, El País (Spa.), Jul. 22, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/economy-and-business/2024-07-22/venezuela-experiences-an-economic-recovery-in-times-of-electoral-uncertainty.html> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹¹ Why Venezuela is no longer in freefall, *The Indicator* from Planet Money, National Public Radio (NPR), May 8, 2024, available at: <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/1197964529> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

Recommendation for the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation

Page 3

over the last year as the government restricted credit, held the exchange rate steady and curbed public spending.”¹² The Maduro government has adopted a series of economic reforms that have led to a “reduction in year-on-year inflation, a recovery of purchasing power, and some improvement in trade.”¹³

Public Health

There was incremental improvement in the life expectancy of Venezuelans, from 2000 to 2024.¹⁴ The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) highlighted the Venezuelan government’s “efforts to address infectious diseases through sensitization programmes across the national territory and strengthening of epidemiological surveillance capacities.”¹⁵ OHCHR also mentioned that the “revamping of the vaccination programme, with the support of the United Nations International Child’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), contributed to declaring Venezuela free of measles in November 2023.”¹⁶

Access to Basic Services (including Electricity, Water, & Fuel)

Venezuela “experiences regular power outages,”¹⁷ while “interruptions in electrical service” are reportedly “common.”¹⁸ However, reports indicate that in the last six months, power outages have diminished. “Many of the energy problems have subsided as the South American nation’s economy has stabilized, high inflation has eased and a de facto dollarization has reduced shortages of imported goods.”¹⁹

Education

¹² Mayela Armas, Venezuela inflation has cooled - but voters say they still can't make ends meet, Reuters, Jul. 23, 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuela-inflation-has-cooled-voters-say-they-still-cant-make-ends-meet-2024-07-23/> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹³ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela grapples with economic collapse, El Pais, Jan. 17, 2025, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2025-01-18/venezuela-grapples-with-economic-collapse.html> (last access Jan. 28, 2025).

¹⁴ Pan American Health Organization, Venezuela – Country Profile, Sept. 24, 2024, available at: <https://hia.paho.org/en/country-profiles/venezuela> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

¹⁵ Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Jun. 28, 2024, pg. 4, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/situation-human-rights-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-ahrc5663-advance-unedited-version> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹⁶ Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Jun. 28, 2024, pg. 4, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/situation-human-rights-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-ahrc5663-advance-unedited-version> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

¹⁷ Venezuela Country Security Report, Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), U.S. Department of State, last updated Mar. 26, 2024, available at: <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Report/34f9e62-2161-412d-bfb-1e752539f6bf> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

¹⁸ Clare Ribando Seelke, Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy, Congressional Research Service (CRS), updated Sep. 1, 2023, pg. 1, available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10230> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

¹⁹ Associate Press, Major power outage hits Venezuela’s capital, with Maduro government blaming ‘sabotage,’ Aug. 30, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-power-outage-b8f412456bdbba9c9e2fb17039ba4cc9> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

Recommendation for the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation

Page 4

There is new focus on the education system and support for teachers. In October 2024, for example, Maduro announced a plan to provide improvements for teachers and the educational system.²⁰ The plan includes a “digital credit-based purchasing program for acquiring goods, a new healthcare plan, coverage for urban transportation, and a monthly subsidy that includes food bags. Additionally, the country’s network of public schools, which have deteriorated significantly in recent years, will undergo a comprehensive maintenance plan, for which Maduro has requested logistical assistance from the Armed Forces.”²¹

Commented [JH6]: This is confusing. Are these things for just teachers and those in the education system? If not, then I recommend making this a broader point at the beginning of the description and focusing more on the plan “to provide improvements for teachers...” here.

Commented [SR7R6]: This plan is just for teachers and the education system. We added a broader opening sentence and additional words to make the paragraph read better.

Crime & Insecurity

Venezuela was once considered the most dangerous country in Latin America.²² However, “a discernible reduction in the overall levels of violence could be observed” in 2023 and 2024.²³ Various factors behind the apparent decline in crime includes Venezuela’s large-scale operations conducted by security forces against criminal groups, and an ongoing economic crisis leaving businesses and citizens unable to pay criminal groups which in turn has caused mass criminal migration and expansion into other countries seeking new opportunities for crime.²⁴ e the country’s “ongoing economic crisis,” which has reportedly reduced “opportunities for extortion and ransom kidnappings,” and led Venezuelan criminal groups to “infiltrate Venezuelan diasporas settled in other Latin American countries.”²⁵ The “monopolization of violence in some regions” by “non-state armed groups,” as well as pacts between Maduro representatives and some criminal groups, have also reportedly contributed to improved perceptions of security in certain areas.²⁶

Commented [JH8]: There is something wrong with this sentence. It needs to be fixed to explain the claimed reduction.

Commented [RV9R8]: Please see suggested edit.

Commented [JH10]: Is it a perception of improvement or improvement?

Commented [SR11R10]: We deleted “perceptions”, since the sentence already includes “reportedly”, which appropriately qualifies the sentence.

National Interest of the United States

“As of November 2020, more than 5.4 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela” were outside of Venezuela.²⁷ Recent estimates indicate that there are over “7.7 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants worldwide, of which 84% (6.5 million) are in Latin America and the Caribbean.”²⁸ Challenges, such as poor treatment and lack of opportunities, faced by Venezuelan

²⁰ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela calls on retired teachers to return to school amid staff shortages, El Pais, Oct. 10, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2024-10-10/venezuela-calls-on-retired-teachers-to-return-to-schools-amid-staff-shortages.html> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²¹ Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela calls on retired teachers to return to school amid staff shortages, El Pais, Oct. 10, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2024-10-10/venezuela-calls-on-retired-teachers-to-return-to-schools-amid-staff-shortages.html> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²² Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²³ Annual Report Violence 2023, Venezuelan Violence Observatory (OVV), Dec. 28, 2023, pg. 30, available at: <https://observatoriodeviolencia.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/OVV-Violence-in-Venezuela-Annual-Report-2023-.pdf> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024); Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²⁵ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²⁶ Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

²⁷ Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan, January – December 2021, R4V, available at: <https://mmp.r4v.info/mmp2021/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

²⁸ Venezuela Situation, Global Appeal 2024, UNHCR, available at: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/venezuela-situation-global-appeal-2024> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

Recommendation for the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation

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nationals in host countries “have led to an increase in the mass and continuous movements of Venezuelan nationals from one country to the other in search of asylum or settlement.”²⁹ In 2023, at least 328,000 Venezuelans – more than double the previous year – took the treacherous Darién Gap route to Central America; most of them trying to reach the United States.³⁰

This migration phenomenon continues to cause a range of problems in the United States. For example, a Venezuelan gang known as *Tren de Aragua* has successfully projected its power abroad.³¹ In the United States, the gang has been blamed for sex trafficking, drug smuggling, police shootings, and the exploitation of migrants, and the United States has sanctioned the gang and placed it on a list of transnational criminal organizations.³²

Termination Determination

Conditions in Venezuela remain challenging, but notable improvements indicate that the conditions that precipitated the initial TPS designation no longer continue. Venezuela no longer continues to meet the statutory requirements for its TPS designation. As such, the statute requires that the TPS designation be terminated.

Additionally, USCIS believes that it may be contrary to the national interest of the United States to permit Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries to remain in the United States. This determination differs from the DOS recommendation. Given the noted criminal activity of some Venezuelan nationals, we recommend the Secretary terminate the TPS designation of Venezuela.

Termination ends TPS benefits for existing Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries. Upon the termination of TPS benefits, former beneficiaries without another immigration status or authorization to remain would no longer have permission to work and remain in the United States. They may, however, apply for other immigration benefits for which they may be otherwise eligible (e.g., asylum, lawful permanent residence).

Effective Date

The effective date of the termination may not be earlier than 60 days after the date the *Federal Register* notice announcing the termination is published or, if later, the expiration of the most recent

²⁹ Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 737, available at:

https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023_Cap_4B_Venezuela_ENG.PDF (last visited Sep. 4, 2024); Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), *The New Humanitarian*, Jun. 25, 2024, available at:

<https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Jan. 28, 2025).

³⁰ Gabriela Mesones Rojo, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), *The New Humanitarian*, June 25, 2024, available at: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

³¹ InSight Crime, *Tren de Aragua*, July 12, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/venezuela-organized-crime-news/tren-de-aragua/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

³² Joshua Goodman, *Tren de Aragua gang started in Venezuela's prisons and now spreads fear in the US*, Associated Press, Sept. 24, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/tren-de-aragua-gang-venezuela-us-a12c8f6e9d04a0ca73769ea893e09e53> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

Commentary 000733 - We are not responsible for the content of any third party website or document.

Recommendation for the Venezuela 2023 Temporary Protected Status Designation

Page 6

previous extension. There is no transition or wind-down period, pending TPS applications will not be adjudicated, and current beneficiaries may not apply to extend their employment authorization documentation past the effective date of termination.

EXHIBIT 35

From: Kelliher, Brian [Redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 10:54 AM
To: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted] Baroukh, Nader
[Redacted] Browne, Rene [Redacted]
Subject: RE: TPS Haiti Docs

Super helpful. Thank you.

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 10:50 AM
To: Kelliher, Brian [Redacted] Baroukh, Nader [Redacted] Browne, Rene
[Redacted]
Subject: TPS Haiti Docs

For Wednesday's TPS meeting, attached are the materials from the most recent Haiti designation.

EXHIBIT 36

McDonald, Christina (OGC) [Redacted]
From: [Redacted] **Redacted**
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 2:30 PM
To: Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES
[Redacted]
Cc: Baroukh, Nader [Redacted] Kelliher, Brian
[Redacted] Browne, Rene [Redacted]
SARTINI, RON [Redacted] DOUGLAS, MACKENZIE
[Redacted]
Subject: FW: For S1 action - USCIS Notice - TPS Haiti Partial Vacatur
Attach: Att A - Dec Doc - Haiti TPS Partial Vacatur 2025.docx; Att B - FRN - Haiti TPS Partial Vacatur - Final.docx; Att C - TPS Legal Authority.pdf; Att D - USCIS Country Conditions - TPS Haiti.pdf; Att E- DOS Rec and Country Conditions TPS Haiti.pdf; Att F - Signed Dec Doc for TPS Haiti 2024.pdf; Att G - July 2024 Fed Reg Notice.pdf; Memo - TPS Haiti Partial Vacatur - 2-15-25.pdf

FYI. I submitted the TPS-Haiti package to DHS ESEC.

Christina E. McDonald

[Redacted]

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC)
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 2:29 PM
To: ESEC-Internal Liaison; [Redacted]
Cc: Blackwell, Juliana; [Redacted]; Fauquet, Stephanie [Redacted]
FOLICK, JULIA [Redacted]
Subject: For S1 action - USCIS Notice - TPS Haiti Partial Vacatur
Importance: High

ESEC Internal Team:

OGC is submitting the following regs package to the DHS Office – **USCIS Notice re Partial Vacatur for TPS Haiti.**

[Redacted]

Joseph Mazzara and Jimmy Percival are closely tracking this matter.

This package has many documents:

1. Legal memo
2. Decision Document
3. Draft Federal Register Notice
4. Six documents for package (They are labeled Att C through Att G)

Let me know if you have any questions. Thank you.

Christina E. McDonald
Associate General Counsel
for Regulatory Affairs
Office of the General Counsel
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Redacted

EXHIBIT 37

TPS Haiti

- Partial Vacatur of item 15 (89 FR 54484 (July 1, 2024) - Reduce to length to 12 months.
 - Why was the full 18 month given?
 - Was not given any review
 - DHS is reducing to 12 months?
 - Allows more review in real time
 - Allows review of national interest in real time

EXHIBIT 38

From: PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, February 17, 2025 9:51 AM
To: Blackwell, Juliana [Redacted] Mazzara, Joseph
 [Redacted]
Subject: Re: [Review Request] USCIS Notice - TPS Haiti Partial Vacatur

I called him

From: Blackwell, Juliana [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, February 17, 2025 9:42:38 AM
To: Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES [Redacted]
Subject: FW: [Review Request] USCIS Notice - TPS Haiti Partial Vacatur

I believe this question is best answered by one of you.

Thanks!

From: LEWANDOWSKI, COREY [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, February 17, 2025 9:22 AM
To: Blackwell, Juliana [Redacted]
Cc: HEMENWAY, TROUP [Redacted] Guy, Joseph [Redacted] Lawrence, Bradyn [Redacted]
Subject: Re: [Review Request] USCIS Notice - TPS Haiti Partial Vacatur

Why is this only a partial ?

From: Blackwell, Juliana [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, February 17, 2025 9:17:41 AM
To: LEWANDOWSKI, COREY [Redacted]
Cc: HEMENWAY, TROUP [Redacted] Guy, Joseph [Redacted] Lawrence, Bradyn [Redacted]
Subject: [Review Request] USCIS Notice - TPS Haiti Partial Vacatur

Good Morning,

OGC is submitting the following regs package for S1 – **USCIS Notice re Partial Vacatur for TPS Haiti.**

The package is seeking S1 decision on whether to partially vacate Secretary Mayorkas' 2024 decision for TPS Haiti.

This has been cleared by Jimmy Percival, Joseph Mazzara, Rob Law, Joe Guy, Troup Hemenway, and Troy Edgar.

My understanding is that the matter is time-sensitive. OGC is looking to submit the signed notice to the Fed Reg on Tuesday morning.

This package has many documents:

1. Legal memo
2. Decision Document
3. Draft Federal Register Notice
4. Six documents for package (They are labeled Att C through Att G)

Thanks,
JJ

Juliana J. Blackwell
Office of the Executive Secretary
Department of Homeland Security

Redacted

EXHIBIT 39

From: Noncent, Karine A [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 2:00 PM
To: Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted]; Deshommes, Samantha L
[Redacted]; Ridley, Sasha M
[Redacted] Mahmoudi, Sheila C
[Redacted] Delgado, Tatyana E
Subject: RE: Haiti stats

Hi Amany,

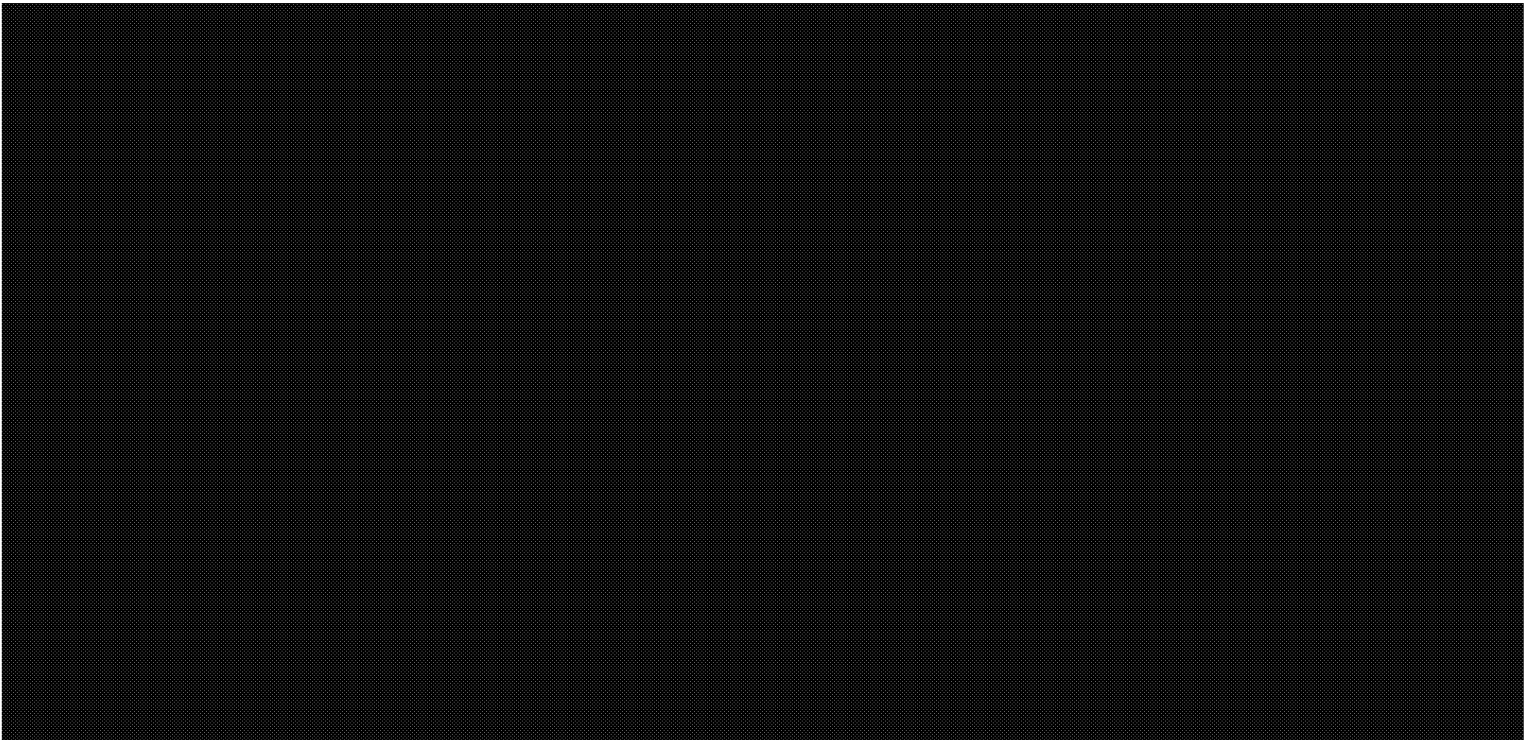
Thanks for following up with this data in such a timely manner. [Redacted]
[Redacted] For now,
there's no other steps we need to take. If any more is needed, we'll be sure to flag it for you.

Thanks again for all you're doing!

Karine A. Noncent
Senior Advisor | Office of Policy and Strategy (OP&S) | USCIS | DHS
[Redacted]

From: Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 12:54 PM
To: Noncent, Karine A [Redacted]; Deshommes, Samantha L
[Redacted] Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted] Mahmoudi, Sheila C
[Redacted] Delgado, Tatyana E [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Haiti stats

Hi Karine,



Please let me know if I should connect with OHSS for that number and the due by time/date.

Thanks,
Amany

From: Noncent, Karine A <[Redacted]>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 8:52 AM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L <[Redacted]>; Ezeldin, Amany S
[Redacted] Ridley, Sasha M <[Redacted]> Mahmoudi, Sheila C
[Redacted] Delgado, Tatyana E <[Redacted]>
Subject: Re: Haiti stats

Thanks Sam - adding Tatyana for visibility as Sasha is out. Appreciate your help Amany getting this info.

OGC requested [Redacted]

Karine A. Noncent
Senior Advisor, Office of Policy and Strategy
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Department of Homeland Security

[Redacted]

From: Deshommes, Samantha L <[Redacted]>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 11:48 AM
To: Ezeldin, Amany S <[Redacted]>; Ridley, Sasha M <[Redacted]>
Mahmoudi, Sheila C <[Redacted]>; Noncent, Karine A
[Redacted]
Subject: Re: Haiti stats

+ Sheila and Karine

Heads-up Sasha and Amany: some questions may be coming down.

Samantha Deshommes
(Acting) Chief,
Office of Policy & Strategy,
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, DHS

[Redacted]

From: Ezeldin, Amany S <[Redacted]>

Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 2:46:48 PM

To: Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted] Ridley, Sasha M

Redacted

Subject: Haiti stats

Hi Sam and Sasha,

OPQ just provided these stats on Haiti TPS. This is the number of EADs issued to Haiti TPS beneficiaries pursuant to the existing extension/redesignation. Please let me know if you have questions about the breakdown.

Thanks,
Amany

Filing Type	Individuals with TPS Haiti EADs Valid Through Feb 3, 2026
Total	47,758
I-765 Initial	29,114
I-765 Renewal	18,644

Amany Ezeldin (she/her)
Policy Analyst, Humanitarian Affairs Division (HAD)
Office of Policy and Strategy (OP&S), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Redacted

EXHIBIT 40

From: Nolan, Connie L [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 6:12 PM
To: Mahmoudi, Sheila C [Redacted] King, Alexander R
 [Redacted] Ezeldin, Amany S
 [Redacted] Ridley, Sasha M
 [Redacted] Smith, Mirna [Redacted]
 Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]
Cc: Selby, Cara M (Carrie) [Redacted] Rodriguez, Sarah
 [Redacted] Patching, Laura D [Redacted]
Subject: Re: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Shelia,
 For Tammy, no need on this one no impact.

As far as OCC, Shelia if you can check with Joe. Some times they have local OCC review and other times DHS OGC.

Thanks
 Connie

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Mahmoudi, Sheila C [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 5:00:29 PM
To: King, Alexander R [Redacted] Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted] Ridley,
 Sasha M [Redacted] Smith, Mirna [Redacted] Deshommes, Samantha L
 [Redacted]
Cc: Nolan, Connie L [Redacted] Selby, Cara M (Carrie) [Redacted] Rodriguez,
 Sarah [Redacted] Patching, Laura D [Redacted]
Subject: RE: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Thanks Alex- SCOPs- do you want to float this over to OCC then ?

Also Connie and Carrie was this supposed to go over to Tammy before we send back to Joe? I can't remember from our call . . .

From: King, Alexander R [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 4:54 PM
To: Mahmoudi, Sheila C [Redacted] Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted]
 Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted] Smith, Mirna [Redacted] Deshommes, Samantha L
 [Redacted]
Cc: Nolan, Connie L [Redacted] Selby, Cara M (Carrie) [Redacted] Rodriguez,
 Sarah [Redacted] Patching, Laura D [Redacted]
Subject: RE: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Here is the Venezuela vacatur notice: <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/notices/Venezuela-Vacatur-FR-SIGNED.pdf>

Thanks,

Alex King
Senior Advisor
Service Center Operations
U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services

Redacted

From: Mahmoudi, Sheila C Redacted

Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 4:42 PM

To: Ezeldin, Amany S Redacted King, Alexander R Redacted Ridley,
Sasha M Redacted Smith, Mirna Redacted Deshommes, Samantha L
Redacted

Cc: Nolan, Connie L Redacted Selby, Cara M (Carrie) Redacted Rodriguez,
Sarah Redacted Patching, Laura D Redacted

Subject: RE: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Thank you Amany-

From: Ezeldin, Amany S Redacted

Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 4:33 PM

To: Mahmoudi, Sheila C Redacted King, Alexander R Redacted
Ridley, Sasha M Redacted Smith, Mirna Redacted Deshommes, Samantha L
Redacted

Cc: Nolan, Connie L Redacted Selby, Cara M (Carrie) Redacted Rodriguez,
Sarah Redacted Patching, Laura D Redacted

Subject: RE: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Hi all,

Thanks,
Amany

From: Mahmoudi, Sheila C Redacted

Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 1:25 PM

To: King, Alexander R Redacted Ridley, Sasha M Redacted Ezeldin,
Amany S Redacted Smith, Mirna Redacted Deshommes, Samantha L

From: [Redacted]
Cc: Nolan, Connie L [Redacted]; Selby, Cara M (Carrie) [Redacted]; Rodriguez, Sarah [Redacted]; Patching, Laura D [Redacted]
Subject: RE: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Thank you Alex- EXA, what Amany provides on this chain shortly should be our final draft. Sasha- the ask was only for the updated FRN so no S1 memo at this time. thanks

From: King, Alexander R [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 4:22 PM
To: Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted]; Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted]; Smith, Mirna [Redacted]; Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]; Mahmoudi, Sheila C [Redacted]
Cc: Nolan, Connie L [Redacted]; Selby, Cara M (Carrie) [Redacted]; Rodriguez, Sarah [Redacted]; Patching, Laura D [Redacted]
Subject: RE: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Adding EXA to this thread.

Thanks,

Alex King
 Senior Advisor
 Service Center Operations
 U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services
 [Redacted]

From: Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 4:15 PM
To: King, Alexander R [Redacted]; Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted]; Smith, Mirna [Redacted]; Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]; Mahmoudi, Sheila C [Redacted]
Cc: Nolan, Connie L [Redacted]
Subject: Re: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Amany is finalizing a few minor things and wrapping up shortly. In the meantime, I was wondering if it might be possible to find out if an S1 memo or similar will be needed and if we should start drafting.

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From: King, Alexander R [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 3:49:25 PM
To: Ezeldin, Amany S [Redacted]; Smith, Mirna [Redacted]; Deshommes, Samantha L [Redacted]; Mahmoudi, Sheila C [Redacted]; Ridley, Sasha M [Redacted]
Cc: Nolan, Connie L [Redacted]
Subject: RE: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Hi Amany,

I took a stab at some language regarding EADs for this unique situation. Please see attached. I also inserted a sentence to cover individuals who may wish to withdraw their TPS applications and request a refund (if applicable).

Posting the language below as well for reference:

EAD IMPACT HERE

Pursuant to this partial vacatur, TPS re-registration applications, initial applications, and associated applications for employment authorization filed pursuant to the July 1, 2024, notice that remain pending with USCIS will, if approved, receive an expiration date of August 3, 2025. TPS beneficiaries under the Haiti TPS designation who have already received EADs; Forms 1-797, Notice of Action (Approval Notice); and Forms 1-94, Arrival/Departure Record (collectively known as TPS-related documentation) with a February 3, 2026, expiration date do not need to re-file applications with USCIS for new TPS-related documentation showing an August 3, 2025, expiration date. USCIS will not disturb TPS-related documentation previously issued with February 3, 2026, expiration dates and those documents remain valid through the new TPS Haiti designation period expiring on August 3, 2025, unless an alien's TPS is withdrawn due to ineligibility pursuant to procedures in 8 CFR 244.14.

Aliens who have filed TPS applications pursuant to the July 1, 2024, notice that remain pending with USCIS may also choose to withdraw their TPS applications and request a refund of any filing fees by submitting a signed written withdrawal request to USCIS.

Thanks,

Alex King
Senior Advisor
Service Center Operations
U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services

Redacted

From: Ezeldin, Amany S **Redacted**
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 3:32 PM
To: Smith, Mirna <**Redacted**>; Deshommes, Samantha L **Redacted**
Mahmoudi, Sheila C **Redacted**; King, Alexander R **Redacted** Ridley,
Sasha M **Redacted**
Subject: RE: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Hi all,

I've added comments to what I can and included some language in track changes. I'm reading the comment on page 12 requesting USCIS language on EAD Impact. I can add information on the estimate we have from OPQ of the number of EADs issued with the Feb. 3, 2026 date, but in the background information below it says that USCIS is not going to go back and take action on those EADs, so are we drafting language to indicate that these EADs were issued but that they will remain valid? If so, I'm not sure how that is possible if the basis for the EAD no longer exists. The regs do not seem to contemplate this scenario.

Alex, do you have language about what happens to these EADs with the later expiration date? That seems to be the missing piece.

Thanks,
Amany

From: Smith, Mirna <**Redacted**>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 12:27 PM
To: Deshommes, Samantha L **Redacted**; Mahmoudi, Sheila C
Redacted; King, Alexander R **Redacted** Ridley, Sasha M
Redacted Ezeldin, Amany S **Redacted**
Subject: RE: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Received and tracking. Thank you!

Mirna Smith
Regulatory Management Branch Chief
Regulatory Coordination Division
Office of Policy & Strategy
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Redacted

From: Deshommes, Samantha L <**Redacted**>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 3:21 PM
To: Mahmoudi, Sheila C <**Redacted**> King, Alexander R <**Redacted**>
Ridley, Sasha M <**Redacted**> Ezeldin, Amany S <**Redacted**>
Cc: Smith, Mirna <**Redacted**>
Subject: Re: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

We also need to add in RCD in case the CIS no needs to be updated, so adding Mirna so she can be on the lookout when you all are ready for her to confirm and work with Sasha and Amany on the review.

Samantha Deshommes
(Acting) Chief,
Office of Policy & Strategy,
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, DHS
Redacted

From: Mahmoudi, Sheila C <**Redacted**>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 3:04:49 PM
To: King, Alexander R <**Redacted**> Ridley, Sasha M <**Redacted**> Ezeldin, Amany S <**Redacted**>
Cc: Deshommes, Samantha L <**Redacted**>
Subject: FW: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Hi Alex- Connie says you have the language we need for this notice that we can crib from Venezuela? Appreciate the assist

Dear Sasha and Amany can you please work with Alex to incorporate that language in this draft.

Background: DO has decided to do a partial vacatur of the 18 months (down to 12 months) for Haiti and they are not going to go back and take any action on those cards that already received the old date. DO needs this asap and asked SCOPs to work with us on it- thanks
-sheila

From: Edlow, Joseph B <**Redacted**>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 2:21 PM
To: Mahmoudi, Sheila C <**Redacted**> Nolan, Connie L <**Redacted**> King, Alexander R <**Redacted**> Selby, Cara M (Carrie) <**Redacted**>
Subject: FW: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

See attached! Really appreciate it.
Joe

From: McDonald, Christina (OGC) <**Redacted**>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 1:50 PM
To: Edlow, Joseph B <**Redacted**>

Cc: LAW, ROB [Redacted] Mazzara, Joseph [Redacted] PERCIVAL, JAMES
[Redacted] Kelliher, Brian [Redacted] Baroukh, Nader

Subject: For USCIS input: TPS Haiti Vacatur Notice

Joe:

Thanks for the call. Please input the USCIS info into the attached draft of the TPS Haiti Partial Vacatur Notice. Thank you!

Christina E. McDonald
Associate General Counsel
for Regulatory Affairs
Office of the General Counsel
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

[Redacted]

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EXHIBIT 41

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January 15, 2025

Confirmation Hearing of Homeland Security

Secretary Nominee Gov. Kristi Noem

Page 1

<p>1 SENATOR PAUL: ... that the department 2 and its components engage in. In other words, we 3 do so much stuff and we're so big we can't 4 describe it for you. But if we can't describe 5 what we have, we got a problem. In plain 6 language, the DHS had really no idea. Think 7 about it. An agency commanding over \$110 billion 8 annually can't account for its own activities. 9 This is not just bureaucratic incompetence, it's 10 emblematic of a deeper issue, an agency unsure of 11 its own boundaries and commitments. How can an 12 agency fulfill its mission or earn the American 13 people's trust if it doesn't even know the extent 14 of its own operations? 15 But the problems don't stop there. 16 Instead of focusing on critical threats like 17 securing the southwest border, DHS has shifted 18 its gaze inward, targeting law-abiding Americans. 19 DHS, under the Biden administration, has often 20 used its vast powers to target Americans 21 exercising their constitutional rights. It's 22 become an agency more focused on policing speech, 23 monitoring social media, and labeling political 24 dissent as "domestic terrorism" than addressing 25 genuine security threats. While cartels traffic</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 liberty hand in hand, not at odds with each 2 other. 3 Today we gather to consider the 4 nomination of Governor Kristi Noem to serve as 5 the Secretary of Department of Homeland Security. 6 I hope this hearing will set the tone for this 7 committee's work in the new Congress to restore 8 transparency and accountability to an executive 9 branch that has grown unchecked. Governor Noem, 10 if confirmed, you will lead an agency that has 11 lost its way. Your record as governor of South 12 Dakota and a former member of Congress 13 demonstrates your willingness to make difficult 14 decisions in the face of significant political 15 pressure, and to put the interest of American 16 people first. You have the opportunity today to 17 address how your background and vision will 18 translate to leading one of the most critical and 19 scrutinized departments in the federal 20 government. 21 This is the first of many consequential 22 moments for this committee as we renew our 23 commitment to the constitutional oversight role 24 that Congress must assert. I have no doubt that 25 the nominee we'll consider in the coming weeks</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p>
<p>1 people and fentanyl across an unguarded border, 2 DHS has spent its time and resources creating 3 partisan disinformation boards, spying on 4 Americans through invasive surveillance 5 technologies. The mission drift is dangerous. 6 Every dollar spent monitoring law-abiding 7 citizens is a dollar not spent securing the 8 homeland. Every moment spent targeting political 9 opponents is a moment not addressing real threats 10 like border security, cyber-attacks, or the 11 rising influence of adversarial nation states. 12 The priorities of DHS have been deeply distorted, 13 and the American people are paying the price. 14 And what about DHS's response to COVID- 15 19, arguably one of the greatest threats to 16 homeland security? The answer is clear: 17 nothing. They knew nothing of the origins, they 18 didn't study the issue, and they had no 19 information about gain-of-function research. 20 We've seen firsthand how unchecked government 21 overreach leads to waste, fraud, and abuse. We 22 cannot let DHS become yet another agency that 23 operates behind a veil of secrecy. The American 24 people deserve transparency, accountability, and 25 leadership that puts national security and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p>	<p>1 and months that you will be up for the challenge. 2 Governor Noem, thank you for your willingness to 3 serve, and I yield to the Ranking Member for his 4 opening remarks. 5 SENATOR PETERS: Thank you, Chairman 6 Paul. Governor Noem, it's great to see you here 7 today, and I want to first thank you for making 8 yourself available not only to the entire 9 committee, but to the discussions that we had in 10 my office. Going perhaps a little more in-depth 11 on the issues than is possible in a hearing like 12 this and having that open and frank conversation 13 is something that I appreciate. Also appreciate 14 your willingness to spend time with committee 15 staff as we conduct our due diligence and review 16 of your qualifications and the background to 17 serve as secretary of the Department of Homeland 18 Security. 19 As our third-largest federal agency, 20 with more than 240,000 employees and an operating 21 budget of more than \$100 billion, the Department 22 of Homeland Security requires strong, stable, and 23 principled leadership. Our nation faces serious 24 threats and security challenges, from securing 25 our borders and combating terrorism to preventing</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p>

<p>1 cyber-attacks and responding to our nation's 2 increasing number of natural disasters, and DHS 3 is the first line of defense in all of those 4 areas. I appreciated the conversations we had at 5 today's hearing, where we discussed the 6 importance of ensuring that our nation's borders 7 are safe and secure. And while we must address 8 the significant challenges we face on the 9 southern border, we also need to ensure that 10 there are sufficient resources to secure our 11 northern border, something I know you're very 12 familiar with as the governor of your state, 13 including building out our Northern Border 14 Mission Center.</p> <p>15 This is especially important in my home 16 state of Michigan, which has two of the nation's 17 busiest border crossings, and we're going to be 18 adding another span shortly, the Gordie Howe 19 International Bridge, which will open later this 20 year. To facilitate the lawful trade and travel 21 out those ports of entry that are absolutely 22 critical to our economy, I've worked on 23 legislation to hire additional U.S. Customs and 24 Border Protection officers to meet increased 25 staffing demands. We must secure our borders,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 companies. There's no question that DHS must 2 continue to lead the way in protecting our 3 networks from foreign adversaries, cyber 4 criminals, and so-called "hacktivists" to prevent 5 cyber-attacks from becoming increasingly 6 devastating to our security as well as to our 7 economy.</p> <p>8 And finally, the Department of Federal 9 Emergency Management Agency must continue to work 10 hard to address the increasing number of natural 11 disasters affecting our communities as a result 12 of climate change. From violent storms like 13 hurricanes that brought destruction to states 14 across the South, to the devastating wildfires in 15 California, and countless other severe storms and 16 flooding events all across our country, we need 17 leadership at the department that will ensure our 18 nation effectively responds to communities when 19 disaster strikes them.</p> <p>20 The safety and security of our nation 21 and the American people depend on the 22 department's ability to effectively address these 23 wide-ranging threats. So, Governor Noem, thank 24 you again for your willingness to serve in this 25 incredibly important position, and thank you for</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p>
<p>1 but we also know it is well time passed to 2 streamline our immigration and our asylum process 3 as well.</p> <p>4 In addition to border security, DHS is 5 responsible for addressing many threats that face 6 our nation. Just a few weeks ago, unfortunately, 7 Americans were shocked to see two horrific 8 incidents in New Orleans and Las Vegas, a deadly 9 reminder that terrorism and radicalization remain 10 very real and ongoing threats to our homeland. 11 In my role on this committee, I've made combating 12 foreign and domestic terrorism, as well as 13 extremism, a top priority. In this complex 14 environment, it is essential that DHS continue to 15 focus on all terrorism threats, track, and report 16 data to Congress and to the American people, and 17 coordinate between all components to ensure the 18 department is effectively addressing all types of 19 terrorist threats.</p> <p>20 We've also seen that persistent cyber- 21 attacks are still a very serious threat. In 22 fact, an increasing threat. A recent attack from 23 Chinese-based hackers infiltrated the Treasury 24 Department, on top of ongoing Salt Typhoon hack 25 that comprised numerous U.S. telecommunications</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 being here today. I look forward to having a 2 comprehensive discussion about how you intend to 3 lead this critical department through a series of 4 national security challenges, if indeed you are 5 confirmed.</p> <p>6 SENATOR PAUL: This morning, Governor 7 Noem will be introduced by Majority Leader John 8 Thune and Senator Kevin Cramer. Senator Thune, 9 you're recognized.</p> <p>10 SENATOR THUNE: Thank you, Mr. 11 Chairman, and Ranking Member Peters, and members 12 of the committee. I'm very pleased to be able to 13 be here today to introduce South Dakota's 14 outstanding governor who has been nominated by 15 President Trump to serve as the Secretary of the 16 Department of Homeland Security. I've known 17 Kristi Noem for a long time. She has a very 18 compelling personal and family story, which 19 inspired her entrance into the public arena, and 20 I'm sure you'll hear a little bit more about that 21 from her. But I've observed as she has gone 22 through the state legislature as a leader there, 23 state House of Representatives, the U.S. House of 24 Representatives, where she was our only member 25 from South Dakota representing our state's</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p>

<p>1 interests there for eight years, and now 2 currently as South Dakota's governor, and I think 3 she brings to this job a number of things that 4 are going to be really essential. 5 And one is obviously a skill set when 6 it comes to managing hard problems. She led our 7 state through the pandemic, managed what were 8 extraordinary circumstances all across this 9 country in a way that made South Dakota, frankly, 10 a magnet for people from other states who were 11 trying to flee or get away from some of the 12 heavy-handed requirements that were imposed in 13 other states around the country. Our state 14 stayed open, stayed free, and that was largely 15 due to her leadership. 16 And I would say too, as we tackle what 17 is an enormously complicated and hard issue, 18 which is our southern border, it's going to 19 require a skill set which I believe she 20 possesses, it's going to require a tremendous 21 amount of persistence and determination, which I 22 think she has, an enormous amount of energy, 23 which she has in abundance. And frankly, what I 24 would say is just absolute toughness. It's going 25 to take some tough and hard leadership to get</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 of the Department of Homeland Security. Thank 2 you, Mr. Chairman. 3 SENATOR PAUL: Senator Cramer? 4 SENATOR CRAMER: Thank you, Chairman 5 Paul, Ranking Member Peters, colleagues. Once 6 again, I find myself in full agreement with the 7 majority leader. It's a good place to be in our 8 business. 9 So, this is a very special opportunity 10 for me, and first thing I want to do is thank 11 nearly all of you. I got into almost every one 12 of your offices with Kristi as her very 13 amateurish sitting Senator Sherpa. And the 14 blessing for me was not only to be with my good 15 friend and former colleague, but to learn a lot 16 about this committee that I'm not on and to get 17 an inside view. And Gary, especially learning 18 how we can work together at the northern border 19 and how similar, although very different, 20 Michigan and North Dakota are. So, thank you for 21 your hospitality, you were all very kind to 22 Kristi and to me. 23 But Kristi is a former colleague. When 24 you're the only member of a body of 435 from an 25 entire state, it's really important to have</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p>
<p>1 things back in order. 2 And I want to refer to something she 3 said in her state of the state address earlier 4 this week to South Dakotans, and that is that 5 "Over the past four years, we've seen a complete 6 disregard for the security of our borders and the 7 safety of the American people, to say nothing for 8 the rule of law. Chaos at our southern border 9 and the Biden administration has left our country 10 vulnerable to a whole host of security concerns, 11 from terrorist entries to cross-border criminal 12 activity like drug trafficking." I think it's 13 well documented, and I think it's high time that 14 it gets fixed, and we have somebody nominated by 15 the President that I believe has the 16 capabilities, the qualities, the experience, and 17 again, frankly, the determination and toughness 18 to solve what is a very, very tough issue, and 19 one which is desperately in need of solutions. 20 So, I'm pleased to be able to be here 21 today to introduce our great governor and to 22 thank you for your consideration. I look forward 23 to this committee acting on her nomination, and I 24 look forward to voting for her on the floor of 25 the United States Senate to be the next Secretary</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p>	<p>1 friends. So, together, Kristi and I were two, 2 two out of 435, and if we could get Montana, 3 Wyoming, and Alaska, there'd be five of us that 4 could take on the fight. But I know this. I 5 remember our very first year, my first year, it 6 was not hers, my first year in the House, the 7 unthinkable happened, and the House of 8 Representatives failed to pass a farm bill. And 9 all I can tell you was the least secure homeland 10 person in America was the Speaker of the House 11 and the Majority Leader the next day, when Kristi 12 and I doubled up, and eventually we got a farm 13 bill done. 14 I say that because we are living at a 15 time, and Senator Peters, you used the words 16 "strong, stable, and principled". I can't think 17 of three better words to describe Kristi Noem 18 than those three words. I would add this. I'm 19 not surprised that President Trump turned to 20 Governor Noem. Securing the homeland is the 21 number one priority, our number one priority, our 22 number one constitutional priority, as a 23 Congress. And it is for sure the number one 24 priority of the voters in the last election. And 25 it is the number one priority for President</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p>

<p>1 Donald Trump. So, naturally he would say, "Hmm, 2 who is the toughest, smartest, most capable 3 protector that I know? I think I'd like to find 4 a ranch woman, mom, grandmother, who knows how to 5 protect her own." And when you grow up on a 6 ranch in the prairies or the West, nobody else is 7 going to look out for your critters. No one else 8 is protecting your family. You do it. 9 And she brings this skill set, as 10 Senator Thune said, as a leader, as a legislator, 11 as a member of Congress, as a governor, a very 12 important... By the way, when I get into the room 13 with other governors, Senator Hassan, I might as 14 well have just left, because I was not part of a 15 club where I don't belong. But anyway, it was 16 very, very rich, because there's an alliance 17 there that's really, really important. And so, 18 for me, it's just a really special opportunity to 19 be able to be here with her and to have had this 20 time in your offices introducing her to you. 21 But I want to wrap up with this, 22 because last night I received a very touching 23 letter, unsolicited by either Kristi or me, from 24 the tribal chairwoman from the Standing Rock 25 Sioux Tribe, which straddles North Dakota and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 to support her and turn it over to her. 2 SENATOR PAUL: Thank you for those 3 great introductions. The committee has also 4 received several statements in support of 5 Governor Noem's nomination, including a letter 6 from 22 fellow governors, the International 7 Association of Firefighters, and six other 8 organizations. Without objection, these letters 9 of support will be made part of the hearing 10 record. And I know our Senators are going to 11 have to go but thank you for coming and doing 12 those introductions. 13 It's the practice of this committee to 14 swear in the witnesses. Governor Noem, please 15 stand and raise your right hand. Do you swear 16 that the testimony you will give before this 17 committee will be the truth, the whole truth, and 18 nothing but the truth, so help you God? 19 GOVERNOR NOEM: I will. 20 SENATOR PAUL: Governor Noem, you are 21 now recognized for your opening statement. 22 GOVERNOR NOEM: Thank you, and good 23 morning, Chairman Paul, Ranking Member Peters, 24 and the distinguished members of this committee. 25 I'm honored to appear before all of you today as</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p>
<p>1 South Dakota. They don't really care who wins 2 the South Dakota State/North Dakota State 3 football game, but they do care about their 4 reservation. And Chairwoman Alkire sent me this 5 letter. Standing Rock is the home of Sitting 6 Bull in case you were wondering about the 7 credentials of their ability to protect the 8 homeland. 9 I'll just read a few words. "On 10 multiple occasions, Governor Noem has invited the 11 Standing Rock Sioux Tribe to her table at the 12 South Dakota State Capitol to enter into 13 meaningful discussions." That's what I witnessed 14 when she came to your offices. And Janet writes, 15 "It is of great excitement and enthusiasm that 16 our North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum will be at 17 the helm of the Department of Interior, and my 18 hopes remain high that you will feel the same 19 about Governor Kristi Noem at the helm of the 20 Department of Homeland Security. These two 21 governors understand the needs in Indian country, 22 and what words like tribal sovereignty, 23 jurisdiction, and consultation mean to the 24 Indigenous people." Speaks volumes to her 25 leadership and to her character. It's my honor</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p>	<p>1 the nominee for the Secretary of Homeland 2 Security. I want to thank President-elect Donald 3 J. Trump for his confidence in my leadership, and 4 the people of South Dakota for their fantastic 5 support throughout my time in public service. I 6 would also like to express my sincere gratitude 7 to Senator Cramer. He has been an invaluable 8 resource to me throughout this process, and given 9 me much wisdom, as well as insight, into the 10 thoughts and the procedures of the Senate and 11 this body. And I'd also like to express my 12 gratitude to Senator Thune, the Majority Leader 13 of this esteemed body. He's been an advisor to 14 me for many years, as well as a friend, and I'm 15 so grateful for the generous support of these two 16 men and their willingness to be here this morning 17 to speak on my behalf, and to introduce me to 18 this committee. 19 Now, I'm a wife and a mother and a 20 grandmother; a farmer, rancher, businessperson. 21 I've served in our state legislature, in Congress 22 for eight years, and also a governor. I've spent 23 my entire life in rural America. I understand 24 what it means to work hard every single day, and 25 to build a better future for your kids and for</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p>

<p>1 all of our communities. I come before you today 2 with a deep sense of responsibility and a 3 humility, as the nominee, to lead the Department 4 of Homeland Security, and also a commitment to 5 the more than 330 Americans who we will work 6 together to help serve and to keep safe and 7 secure in their homes and in their communities. 8 Now, before I proceed, I want to 9 introduce to you my husband, Bryon, who's here 10 with me today. He is my constant 24/7 reminder 11 of our dedication to public service, and that 12 it's not a solo effort or done alone. He has 13 been a rock by my side, and I appreciate all of 14 his love over so many years. I'm grateful that 15 he's here with me today. 16 Now, securing our homeland is a 17 serious, sacred trust that must be relentlessly 18 pursued, and can never be taken for granted. 19 Being safe within our borders here in America is 20 critical, and yet Americans feel less safe than 21 they have felt in decades. For the first time in 22 30 years, more than 40 percent of Americans are 23 afraid to walk alone at night within a mile of 24 their homes. President-elect Trump is going to 25 change that. I've seen firsthand the challenges</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 leading the Department of Homeland Security. 2 As we face the evolving threats of the 3 21st century, the mission and the success of DHS 4 is more critical than ever. We must be vigilant 5 and proactive and innovative to protect the 6 homeland. The challenges in front of us are 7 extremely significant, and we must secure our 8 borders against illegal trafficking and 9 immigration. We must safeguard our critical 10 infrastructure to make sure that we're protected 11 against cyber-attacks, respond to natural 12 disasters, and also terrorism. I firmly believe 13 that we can meet those challenges head on with 14 resolve. Innovation, we can use collaboration 15 with federal and with state partners. And 16 Senators, I want your input. Border security 17 must remain a top priority. As a nation, we have 18 the right and the responsibility to secure our 19 borders against those who would do us harm, and 20 we must create a fair and a lawful immigration 21 system that is efficient, and is effective, and 22 that reflects our values. 23 President Trump was elected with a 24 clear mandate. He needs to achieve this mission, 25 because two-thirds of Americans support his</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p>
<p>1 and the opportunities facing our great nation. 2 In the 20 years since the Department of Homeland 3 Security was formed, the nature of the threats to 4 our homeland has grown and they've evolved. This 5 department was created in response to the 6 failures of the government that led to the 7 September 11th 2001 terrorist attacks, and that 8 reality is not lost on me, especially in the wake 9 of the recent terrorist attacks over New Year's. 10 Now, I've led South Dakota for the last 11 six years, with a focus every day on making our 12 state safer, stronger, and freer. I've focused 13 every day on making the best decisions, not just 14 for right now, but for generations to come. I've 15 overseen a state budget of over \$7 billion, and a 16 state employee workforce of more than 13,000, 17 including more than 7,000 that report directly to 18 the governor. I've addressed important issues 19 like cyber security, human trafficking, drug 20 interdiction, and also natural disasters, the 21 same challenges that are facing so many of you 22 and the people that you represent back home. 23 I've secured our state and supported the rule of 24 law, and if confirmed as the eighth secretary, 25 that is the same approach that I will take to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p>	<p>1 immigration and border policies, including the 2 majority of Hispanic Americans. I was the first 3 governor to send National Guard troops to our 4 southern border when Texas asked for help and 5 when they were being overwhelmed by an 6 unprecedented border crisis. If confirmed as 7 secretary, I'll ensure that our exceptional, 8 extraordinary Border Patrol agents have all the 9 tools and resources and support that they need to 10 carry out their mission effectively. The same is 11 true of my commitment to the outstanding men and 12 women of the U.S. Immigration and Customs 13 Enforcement. They are responsible for 14 apprehending, detaining, and deporting illegal 15 immigrants, and getting criminal aliens off of 16 our streets and out of the country will help 17 American communities be safer again. The bravery 18 and the dedication of the Border Patrol and ICE 19 are unmatched, and I will restore dignity to 20 their work. The rising threat of cyberattacks 21 also demands our utmost attention, and our 22 critical infrastructure, from energy grids to 23 financial institutions, is under constant attack 24 by foreign adversaries and criminal actors. As 25 secretary, I will prioritize a comprehensive,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p>

<p>1 whole-of-government approach to cybersecurity. 2 In fact, in the coming days, we have to plan 3 bigger and think faster and smarter. I fully 4 acknowledge that people in Washington D.C. do not 5 have all of the answers, and therefore, I will 6 leverage private-public partnerships, I'll 7 advance cutting-edge, state-of-the-art 8 technologies to protect our nation's digital 9 landscape, and I will have a proven track record 10 of doing this in South Dakota to back me up. 11 I've helped make Dakota State University a global 12 leader in cybersecurity education, because we 13 recognize the need to address this emerging 14 threat. And I will take a proactive approach if 15 given the opportunity to serve as secretary. 16 Now, President-elect Trump has been a tremendous 17 friend to law enforcement over the years, and I 18 will do the same in my role as secretary. As 19 governor, I've worked closely with law 20 enforcement to make South Dakota safer. I've 21 overseen hundreds of state troopers in the South 22 Dakota Highway Patrol, and on several occasions, 23 I've convened groups of law enforcement from 24 across our state to address policies that will 25 make our people safer. In fact, while some in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 homeland security isn't just about prevention, 2 but it's also about resilience. When disasters 3 strike, as we know they will, the Department of 4 Homeland Security must be ready to respond 5 swiftly, efficiently, and effectively to protect 6 the lives and the property of Americans. As 7 governor, I've worked with FEMA in response to a 8 dozen natural disasters in South Dakota. These 9 have included historic floods, tornadoes, 10 blizzards, wildfires, a derecho, and even a 11 global pandemic. As secretary, I will enhance 12 our emergency preparedness and strengthen FEMA's 13 capabilities, and we will ensure that no 14 community is left behind, and that life-saving 15 services, like electricity and water, are quickly 16 restored.</p> <p>17 As secretary, I will oversee the Secret 18 Service, an agency that is in serious need of 19 reforms. We all saw the threats to President- 20 elect Trump last year and the consequences of 21 failure. Now, that should never happen again, 22 and I've worked closely with my own gubernatorial 23 protective detail, and I'm familiar with what 24 works and what doesn't work, and I'll bring that 25 experience towards strengthening the Secret</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p>
<p>1 this country were attacking law enforcement and 2 defunding them, we took the opposite approach in 3 South Dakota. We recruited law enforcement 4 officers to move to South Dakota, a state that 5 respects their service and their sacrifice, and 6 we revamped our law enforcement training to 7 provide the first ever state-led tribal-focused 8 law enforcement training academy. I'm very proud 9 of the work that we've done in cooperation with 10 our tribes to help make their communities more 11 safe.</p> <p>12 And we must remain vigilant against 13 terrorism and against others who wish to do us 14 harm to our country and to our great people. 15 I'll ensure that our intelligence and our law 16 enforcement agencies are working together hand- 17 in-hand, that they're fully equipped to detect, 18 prevent, and respond to threats from radical 19 ideologies and foreign adversaries. This 20 requires resources, coordination, and 21 collaboration across all levels of government. 22 And once again, I will seek your wisdom, and I 23 will seek your input into the months ahead. For 24 the sake of the people that we both represent, we 25 have to get this right. Now, I recognize that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p>	<p>1 Service once again.</p> <p>2 I'm committed to working with this 3 committee, with Congress, and with the dedicated 4 men and women of the Department of Homeland 5 Security to fulfill our mission. And together, 6 we can ensure that the United States remains a 7 beacon of freedom, safety, and security for 8 generations to come. So, thank you for the 9 opportunity and the honor to appear before you 10 today. Thank you for the meetings and the time 11 that you took in your office to discuss the 12 department and what we can do in the future to 13 make the American homeland much more secure. I 14 look forward to your questions, and I hope to 15 earn your trust, and hopefully also your vote, as 16 we embark on this critical work together. With 17 that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.</p> <p>18 SENATOR PAUL: Thank you, Governor 19 Noem. We will now proceed to questions. Each 20 member will have seven minutes. We will have a 21 vote that will start at 10:00 a.m., but we're 22 going to continue the hearing and keep people in 23 line; as you come and go to vote, we'll keep the 24 hearing moving. I want to be clear from the 25 outset that we will not tolerate any disruptions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>

<p>1 The Capitol Police have been asked to escort 2 anyone immediately from the room if they disrupt 3 the hearing. 4 This is a standard question, Governor 5 Noem, that we ask of all nominees. Governor 6 Noem, do you agree without reservation to comply 7 with any request or summons to appear and testify 8 before any duly constituted Committee of Congress 9 if you are confirmed? 10 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Mr. Chairman, 11 SENATOR PAUL: I'm going to reserve the 12 rest of my time for my questions and go to 13 Senator Peters. 14 SENATOR PETERS: Thank you, Mr. 15 Chairman. Governor Noem, the DHS Secretary, has 16 many competing priorities, as you well know, and 17 you outlined, certainly, in your opening 18 comments, from our borders to wildfires to cyber- 19 attacks. But as you and I discussed at length, 20 and I appreciate you bringing it up in your 21 opening comments as well, we do have a northern 22 border in addition to a southern border, that's 23 absolutely essential that the DHS has the 24 resources necessary at the northern border to 25 carry out its mission, both between ports of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 addressing all threats that may come in from any 2 direction. And also, with the bridge as well and 3 staffing up on that, that as well, and I've 4 assured Senator Slotkin as well that our focus is 5 there to make sure that it is staffed 6 appropriately. 7 SENATOR PETERS: Very good. And as we 8 discussed, the department is diligently working 9 to stand up the Northern Border Mission Center at 10 Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Michigan, 11 following the authorization and funding that I 12 was able to secure in the last Congress. This 13 center is critical to supporting the Department's 14 northern border security missions and addressing 15 evolving threats. So, quick question: if 16 confirmed, do you commit to working with me to 17 fully build out the Northern Border Mission 18 Center? 19 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator, we will 20 look forward, and I look forward, to working with 21 you to ensure that that is a priority, and that 22 it's adequately resourced, and working with 23 Congress and Senators to make sure that we have 24 what we need to make sure that that mission for 25 that base is fully fulfilled.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p>
<p>1 entry and all along the border. In fact, we've 2 seen an increase in unauthorized crossings in 3 recent years at the northern border. 4 So, my question for you is, if 5 confirmed, do you commit to ensuring, along with 6 the southern border, that the northern border is 7 sufficiently staffed to maintain its security and 8 robust trade between the U.S. and its neighbors, 9 including at the Gordie Howe International Bridge 10 in my home state of Michigan, have the resources 11 they need to facilitate trade, while keeping 12 Americans safe? 13 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator Peters, 14 you and I talked about this in your office, and 15 also with Senator Slotkin as well, how important 16 it is to continue to remain focused on our 17 northern border, and all borders and ports of 18 entry that the United States has. I think 19 there's been some universal concern from some of 20 the committee members that as we focus on the 21 southern border and what we're seeing, as far as 22 the invasion there and the amount of people 23 crossing, that the northern border would lose 24 focus. But that will not happen, and we will 25 ensure that our borders are secure, and we're</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p>	<p>1 SENATOR PETERS: Great. Thank you. On 2 New Year's, we witnessed two incidents that 3 reminded us that terrorism and extremism remain 4 serious threats to all Americans. Both DHS and 5 the FBI have consistently said that the most 6 persistent threat to the homeland is from U.S.- 7 based individuals or small groups radicalized by 8 a variety of ideologies, from white supremacy to 9 ISIS to al-Qaeda. We must certainly continue to 10 focus on people who are radicalized here in the 11 United States with the intent of terrorizing our 12 communities. So, my question for you, ma'am, is 13 how do you plan to address this threat of U.S.- 14 based terrorists? 15 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, this is a 16 grave concern for our country, as we all agree 17 that the number one threat to our homeland 18 security is the southern border. In fact, since 19 Joe Biden has been president, we've seen 382 20 individuals that have come over that border that 21 are on the terrorist watch list. I, behind me, 22 have the governor of Louisiana with me, and he 23 and his state and people in this country went 24 through a horrific event on New Year's Day, and 25 one that we never want to see repeated again.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 29</p>

<p>1 But this governor behind me is concerned also 2 about an upcoming event, which is the Super Bowl, 3 coming shortly, which we need to do all that we 4 can to work together, that he has the reassurance 5 that the federal government, that the Department 6 of Homeland Security, is prepared to help him 7 protect that event, and to keep people safe while 8 they are there.</p> <p>9 Those 382 terrorists are known 10 terrorists that have come over our border. We 11 don't know necessarily where they are because of 12 what has been happening under Joe Biden's 13 policies. Now, President Trump obviously won the 14 last election with a clear mandate, and that 15 mandate is for the American people to secure that 16 border. But also, we need to focus on domestic 17 terrorism and homegrown terrorism, which you just 18 referenced in your question. Homegrown</p> <p>19 GOVERNOR NOEM: Homegrown terrorism is 20 on the rise. We see more and more incidents of 21 people that are U.S. citizens that have become 22 radicalized. And knowing when people are leaving 23 the country and coming back and changes to their 24 behaviors and what their actions are is 25 critically important.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 infiltrated the Department of Treasury and stole 2 potentially thousands of unclassified documents. 3 So, given these concerning trends by the PRC to 4 hold our federal networks' hostage, do you 5 believe that federal agencies should be required 6 to implement cybersecurity upgrades and maintain 7 the highest cybersecurity standards to protect 8 sensitive or classified data and U.S. citizen 9 information as well?</p> <p>10 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, Senator, the 11 mission of CISA, which is the Cybersecurity and 12 Infrastructure Agency, the mission of it is to 13 hunt and harden. It's to find those bad actors 14 and help work with local and state 15 infrastructure, critical infrastructure entities 16 so that they can help them be prepared for such 17 cyber-attacks and that they can make sure that 18 they're hardening their systems to protect them 19 in the future, recognizing the vulnerabilities 20 that they have.</p> <p>21 CISA has gotten far off mission. 22 They're using their resources in ways that was 23 never intended. The misinformation and 24 disinformation that they have stuck their toe 25 into and meddled with should be refocused back</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p>
<p>1 So, the resources that the Department 2 of Homeland Security has needs to be utilized as 3 far as identifying those threats and being 4 proactive to prevent them but also protecting 5 civil rights and liberties in that process and 6 making sure that the department is on mission to 7 do what it was called to do, why it was created, 8 and what authorities that Congress and the Senate 9 has given them.</p> <p>10 My hope is that Governor Landry and his 11 staff and his people and the people that attend 12 the Super Bowl know that the Department of 13 Homeland Security is their partner, is on watch 14 to protect them and to keep that event safe. I 15 hope all Americans know that leadership has 16 consequences. I hope that we can get through and 17 get your support for this nomination and get 18 confirmed quickly so that we can address the 19 threats that we currently face and make sure we 20 don't have any repeats of the day that we saw 21 just starting this year on New Year's Day.</p> <p>22 SENATOR PETERS: In the last two years, 23 we have seen increasingly aggressive and 24 expansive cyber-attacks against our federal 25 agencies. Just last month, Chinese hackers</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p>	<p>1 onto what their job is, and that is to support 2 critical infrastructure and to help our local and 3 small businesses and critical infrastructure at 4 the state level to have the resources and be 5 prepared for those cyber-attacks that they will 6 face.</p> <p>7 Salt Typhoon was a campaign of 8 espionage by the PRC in China against our 9 telecoms where large amount of data was stolen 10 and taken, and people's private information was 11 taken as well. And we've also seen China and the 12 PRC go after our critical infrastructure with the 13 Volt Typhoon hack, and that was extremely 14 dangerous because there was no reason for them to 15 do that, just to steal people's data and 16 information.</p> <p>17 The reason for them to go after that 18 was to control our critical infrastructure for 19 the ability to see if they could shut down a 20 water plant, a utility company. And that was to 21 cripple our country. So, these threats are real. 22 CISA needs to be much more effective, smaller, 23 more nimble to really fulfill their mission, 24 which is to hunt and to help harden our nation's 25 critical infrastructure.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p>

<p>1 SENATOR PETERS: Thank you. 2 GOVERNOR NOEM: Thank you. 3 SENATOR JOHNSON: Senator Scott. 4 SENATOR SCOTT: Governor, 5 congratulations on your nomination. 6 GOVERNOR NOEM: Thank you. 7 SENATOR SCOTT: I think you're going to 8 do a great job. 9 GOVERNOR NOEM: Thank you. 10 SENATOR SCOTT: I think it's great that 11 you're a governor and you bring that expertise to 12 the table. So, I just went through the campaign 13 to get reelected, and it was after the Butler 14 shooting. I had asked people at all my events. 15 I say, "Raise your hand if you think the acting 16 director of the Secret Service is going to tell 17 us what happened." Not one person. I said, 18 "What about Mayorkas? He's running HHS, what do 19 you think, or Homeland Security. What do you 20 think?" I said, "How about Christopher Wray, 21 head of the FBI?" Not one person. Can you just 22 talk about the importance of transparency and 23 accountability in government and how you're going 24 to bring that to the table? 25 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah. Senator, Scott,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 people there and being adequately staffed and 2 resourced. 3 But frankly, the leadership hasn't been 4 honest about talking about it. We saw this with 5 the drones over New Jersey as well, the federal 6 government not answering the questions from the 7 public. And when they finally got a straight 8 answer out of President Trump, they felt 9 reassured that somebody recognized that this was 10 something they were questioning and that they 11 deserved answers. 12 My goal and my mission is to build 13 trust. We will undertake a large job and a large 14 duty that we have to fulfill, that the American 15 people expect us to do by securing our border to 16 make sure that our nation is a nation with 17 borders or we're no nation at all, and that we 18 are making sure that those criminal actors that 19 are perpetuating violence in our communities and 20 in our cities and towns and states are removed 21 from this country, that there's consequences for 22 breaking the law in our country again. 23 There has to be consequences because 24 when Americans break the law, there's 25 consequences. And why would we ever allow</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 36</p>
<p>1 thank you for that question because that's what I 2 have found across the country as well, and I know 3 it's certainly true in my home state of South 4 Dakota, is that people don't trust the federal 5 government. They don't trust our leadership and 6 this current administration that's in the White 7 House right now to tell them the truth, to tell 8 them the truth about what the threats really are 9 about our agencies and departments when there are 10 failures, addressing them and fixing it. 11 The Secret Service is one of those 12 perfect examples. They need leadership that 13 understands why that Secret Service was created 14 and what it needs to do. There's two elements 15 really that the Secret Service is tasked with, 16 and that is protective detail and then also 17 investigations. Yet we see investigators within 18 the Secret Service out there investigating 19 antiquities and other things that are off mission 20 when they should be focused on making sure we're 21 addressing national security events with the 22 protocols that are necessary and protecting the 23 individuals that they're charged with and getting 24 that skill set and training that are necessary. 25 That's been compromised by not having enough</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 35</p>	<p>1 someone to come in from another country and not 2 have consequences or allow them to continue to go 3 forward and to commit rape and murders and other 4 break other laws that endanger our society? So, 5 we've had over 13,000 murders that are loose in 6 this country that have come over that border. 7 We've had almost 16,000 rapists and sexual 8 assault perpetrators that are loose in this 9 country right now. 425,000 plus people have 10 criminal convictions that are here illegally in 11 this country that our current administration's 12 doing nothing to round them up and get them out 13 of our country. 14 We will be doing that immediately, and 15 that will be the priority, and that is one of the 16 reasons that today the American people have lost 17 their trust. President Trump will build it back 18 and know that their federal government is 19 accountable to them and is working to put America 20 first again. 21 SENATOR SCOTT: So, Joe Biden 22 completely opened on our southern border and 23 dismantled our entire immigration system. As a 24 former governor, I know that when the federal 25 government policies are broken and failing</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p>

<p>1 Americans, you see the impacts in your state just 2 like I did when I was a governor, and you take 3 the steps necessary to protect the families in 4 your state. I know you've done that. 5 One thing you did is you talked about 6 before you sent troops, our National Guard, to 7 the southern border. Can you talk more about how 8 Biden's open border policy has affected your 9 state and communities and the role your state 10 resources placed in helping secure the border? 11 GOVERNOR NOEM: We certainly have seen 12 the effects in South Dakota that many of your 13 states did. And I would say every state has seen 14 the effects of an open border in the policies 15 that have been under the Biden administration. 16 We saw increased crime, but we also saw increased 17 drug activity. We saw cartel in their affiliates 18 moving into our state to proliferate trafficking, 19 and we saw people being victimized and a lack of 20 accountability with the federal government. 21 So, when Texas was addressing the 22 situation and asked other governors for help, we 23 sent help. I know many of the other governors at 24 the time were sending law enforcement, but I made 25 the decision that at that time that it was more</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 security operations. They also did building of 2 the wall and partnered with Texas recognizing the 3 failures of the federal government. 4 The failures of the federal government 5 are significant, and we've seen our families and 6 communities devastated by those effects, by the 7 drug epidemic, by the trafficking that's going 8 on. They increased crime. And we recognize that 9 just because the federal government wasn't doing 10 their job, we could not fail our state. And I 11 needed to protect the people of South Dakota. 12 And the people of South Dakota were 13 overwhelmingly supportive of these deployments 14 and very proud of our National Guard. 15 SENATOR SCOTT: When I was governor of 16 Florida, there was a terrorist hack in Paris by 17 Syrian refugees. So, President Obama was 18 president, and I said, "I'd like to know if 19 you're going to send refugees to my state that 20 you give us some background on them." I assume 21 you vetted them and tell us what's going on. You 22 have to tell me, but you ought to tell our state 23 law enforcement and our local law enforcement 24 that they said, "Go jump in the lake." 25 (Indiscernible) meaner than that, but they said,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p>
<p>1 appropriate to send the National Guard that our 2 National Guard could be activated under Title 32 3 and sent to assist another state from the 4 invasion that was happening and because the 5 National Guard is trained for just such a 6 mission. 7 Because of this invasion, that it is a 8 war zone down there with what they are going to 9 see, the threats that they would see and that 10 they are trained specifically to interact with 11 other agencies, the National Guard is used to 12 falling in with other agencies and cooperating 13 with them and could do that seamlessly, and their 14 families and their communities are normalized to 15 them being deployed. 16 So, we have in South Dakota deployed 17 our National Guard to the southern border eight 18 different times. Two of them were federal 19 deployments that the Biden administration sent 20 them down there. One was to send our Lakota 21 helicopters, which were used for surveillance in 22 the drug interdiction that was going on down 23 there. But six other times, I sent them under 24 state activation to partner with Texas and other 25 states in securing our southern border. They did</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p>	<p>1 "You have no rights as a governor," which had 2 made no sense. We had over 70,000 people come 3 here after Afghanistan on planes into this 4 country completely unvetted. They've never given 5 our governors any information. So, would you 6 change that? 7 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes. The communication 8 between states and the federal government has 9 been absolutely broken, and that's what I love 10 about this committee, is you do have governors 11 sitting on this committee that have been in that 12 role as a commander in chief and have the 13 responsibility for being the CEOs of their state. 14 It's a different perspective than 15 serving. I served in Congress too, and both are 16 extremely important, and they're just different 17 in that responsibility that weighs on your 18 shoulder. I often told folks that that is the 19 thing that most times if something was going to 20 keep me up at night, it was the responsibility 21 that I had being commander in chief, recognizing 22 the decisions that I made. And I'm sure you had 23 this feeling as well, Senator Scott, as governor, 24 that impacted those families, those soldiers. 25 And it impacted their communities when we pulled</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p>

<p>1 them out and the importance of that. 2 And when they were bringing refugees 3 into the country, I as well communicated that to 4 the federal government. They were bringing 5 refugees, and I asked how they were vetted, how 6 we were working with their home countries to find 7 out who they really were, what their intentions 8 were and why they were coming to the United 9 States and received no information from this 10 administration that that vetting process was 11 being done, that we knew where they're going. 12 In fact, they kept us in the dark and 13 didn't communicate to us even what states and 14 where those refugees were being placed. So, that 15 is something that we need to change when we have 16 programs that fall under the purview of the 17 Department of Homeland Security. There needs to 18 be communication, especially with the governor, 19 so that we can coordinate to ensure that it's the 20 right thing for that state. 21 SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you. 22 SENATOR JOHNSON: Senator Hassan. 23 SENATOR HASSAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. 24 And welcome, Governor Noem. I really appreciate 25 you being here. Welcome to your family as well.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 at the northern border recently, law enforcement 2 told me about the need for more personnel and 3 resources. We still don't have cell phone 4 coverage in a lot of the stretch of our northern 5 border. I've worked with Senator Kramer on 6 bipartisan legislation to strengthen our northern 7 border strategy because it's clear more support 8 is needed. So, Governor, if you're confirmed, 9 would you deploy additional full-time personnel 10 and upgrade equipment along the northern border? 11 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, I enjoyed our 12 meeting that we had and you identifying the 13 northern border issues that are going on, the 14 lack of security and the lack of technologies 15 that you really need to cover, some of the 16 landscapes that are there very different than the 17 southern border, some just as equally challenging 18 but all need to be addressed. 19 So, I definitely will be working with 20 you to ensure that our northern border is 21 adequately resourced as well, and we do have to 22 have the resources in order to be successful. 23 SENATOR HASSAN: Right. 24 GOVERNOR NOEM: That's something I want 25 to work with Congress, with the Senate and the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p>
<p>1 GOVERNOR NOEM: Thank you. 2 SENATOR HASSAN: And families do share 3 in this kind of public service, and we appreciate 4 them very much. As we discussed at our meeting 5 last month, as a former governor, I appreciate 6 the important responsibilities that governors 7 have to ensure the safety and security of their 8 communities, including by managing public safety 9 and emergency agencies. 10 And I will say that, in many ways, I 11 agree with some of the things that Senator Scott 12 just said about improving communication between 13 the Department of Homeland Security and governors 14 around who is being sent to states. It's a 15 critical issue and something that I was 16 frustrated by when I was governor. So, I look 17 forward to hearing more today about your 18 priorities if confirmed about how your experience 19 as governor would help you run the Department of 20 Homeland Security. 21 Let me just start by following up with 22 a question that Senator Peters had also touched 23 on. We have recently, in New Hampshire, seen a 24 dramatic increase in unauthorized border 25 crossings at the northern border. And when I was</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p>	<p>1 House on to ensure that the resources are there 2 to meet the challenges that we have. We have not 3 fully utilized the technologies that are 4 available that are necessary to really secure 5 this country and to compete with those bad actors 6 which wish to infiltrate our country and having 7 the ability to utilize them will make us much 8 more safe. So, I'll work with you most 9 definitely ensuring the northern border is 10 protected. 11 SENATOR HASSAN: Well, I appreciate 12 that, and I just note too that at the same time, 13 there's real concern in New Hampshire and all 14 along the northern border that we strengthen the 15 border and have the resources we need. We also 16 have a really strong economic relationship with 17 our friends to the north and a lot of family 18 relationships. 19 So, I think it's important that we're 20 smart in the deployment of technology. We don't 21 want to impede that flow of economy and people 22 that's lawful, but we do want to make sure that 23 we have the resources we need. I want to turn to 24 the southern border now. 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p>

<p>1 At the southern border, we need 2 significant technological investments to support 3 law enforcement personnel in their efforts to 4 catch fentanyl smugglers to stop human 5 traffickers and seize the cash and illegal guns 6 that criminals traffic southward to the cartels. 7 And we talked about this a little bit. 8 There's bipartisan support for these 9 investments, and I've worked with colleagues 10 including Senators Lankford and Cornyn on 11 legislation around these issues. Governor Noem, 12 could you identify specific technological 13 investments that you would make at the southern 14 border and are you willing to work with me on 15 increasing southbound inspections if you're 16 confirmed? 17 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes. Certainly, 18 Senator. You've heard President Trump talk about 19 the need to build a wall. And the wall and 20 infrastructure is critically important. But 21 also, at our 382 legal ports of entry, we need to 22 have technology so that flow can happen north and 23 south, and it can happen in a legal manner to 24 ensure that our commerce can continue to operate, 25 and that we can continue to make sure that we're</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 attack on power school, a cloud-based record 2 management system that contains personal 3 information about tens of millions of 4 kindergartners through high school seniors, 5 including many students and teachers in New 6 Hampshire. 7 This cyber-attack on power school comes 8 as schools and local governments across the 9 country have seen a surge in cyber-attacks on 10 their systems. And when a small of maybe a 11 thousand students or so has to pay \$2 million in 12 ransom, I want you to think about what that does 13 to one of our small communities. Right? So, 14 Governor Noem, if you're confirmed, how will you 15 empower the cybersecurity and infrastructure 16 security agency to improve the cybersecurity of 17 state and local governments in the United States? 18 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, thank you, 19 Senator. If I am confirmed and have the 20 opportunity to serve as secretary of this 21 department, I'll be following the constitution 22 and the rule of law and then getting these 23 departments back on mission to why they were 24 created and why they are existing. 25 What CISA should be doing is helping</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p>
<p>1 also secure. 2 I think de minimis shipments are a 3 concern and the need to look at those and how 4 traffickers and fentanyl distributors are using 5 that. I think we also need to use scanners 6 surveillance operations. There's new 7 technologies out there to cooperate with 8 satellites in some area where the topography does 9 not necessarily facilitate having actual 10 infrastructure and then also the ability to make 11 sure that we're utilizing that technology that 12 allows us to know what is going south that might 13 be fueling some of the violence that ends up 14 coming back north and ensuring that we're 15 stopping that before it has the chance to supply 16 those cartel and bad actors that would come in. 17 SENATOR HASSAN: Yeah. I really 18 appreciate that because the southbound flow, 19 particularly of cash and weapons, fuels the 20 cartels and strengthens them. 21 GOVERNOR NOEM: Absolutely. 22 SENATOR HASSAN: And it's something 23 that we really have to focus on. I also want to 24 follow up on the issue of cyber security. 25 Recently, criminals launched a successful cyber-</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p>	<p>1 those small entities, those schools, those local 2 city governments, the state governments, and the 3 small businesses that are critical infrastructure 4 that don't have the resources to stay on top of 5 the critical protections that they need to enact. 6 SENATOR HASSAN: Well, let me follow up 7 just quickly on that one point. It's something 8 we discussed when we had our meeting. I worked 9 with Senator Cornyn on a bipartisan bill. It 10 became law that created a cybersecurity grant 11 program for state and local governments. This is 12 an addition to each state getting a cyber 13 coordinator to help on the ground. 14 We discussed this program, and I know 15 you as governor had some reservations about the 16 structure of the program, but if confirmed, will 17 you commit to working with Congress to adjust it? 18 I'd love your input about what gave you pause as 19 governor. I think there were only two governors 20 who didn't participate in the program. And I 21 hope that as we work on the concerns you have, 22 you'd work with me to adjust and reauthorize the 23 program. 24 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes. All grants within 25 the department will be evaluated when I come in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p>

<p>1 and be looked at to see what we can do to make 2 sure that they're actually fulfilling the mission 3 to which they were established. What I would say 4 about the cybersecurity grants in South Dakota, 5 when I came in as governor, one of my main 6 priorities was to bring the next industry into 7 the state. And I determined that that would be 8 technology and cybersecurity.</p> <p>9 In fact, we have Dakota State 10 University in our state, which is a cybersecurity 11 national leader in training those cyber warriors 12 that we need to protect us and keep us safe. 13 I've since then partnered to grow and double the 14 size of that school. We train a lot of NSA 15 employees in South Dakota. And so, understanding 16 cybersecurity and my experience and that I think 17 is critically important to the department and 18 bringing it to the table to do this.</p> <p>19 You talked about why we didn't take 20 that cybersecurity grant in South Dakota, and 21 it's because the requirements of that grant 22 would've caused me to grow my state government. 23 The administration costs of it would've been much 24 more than what it been able to facilitate at the 25 local level. And our state was already</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 Mayorkas has been an absolute disgrace to that 2 department and frankly to this country. And I'm 3 delighted to see you willing to step up and 4 serve. Let me just ask you something. I 5 repeatedly asked your predecessor when he sat 6 where you're sitting, whether the southern border 7 was secure. And he repeatedly told me under 8 oath, "It is secure, Senator." And he repeatedly 9 said under oath, "Our policies are working, 10 Senator," meaning the Biden administration 11 policies that, of course, gave us this 12 devastating open border. So, let me just ask 13 you, is the southern border secure as we find it 14 today?</p> <p>15 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, no. The 16 southern border is not secure today. But in just 17 three days, we will have a new president in this 18 country, President Donald J. Trump. And he will 19 secure our border.</p> <p>20 SENATOR HAWLEY: That is refreshing 21 candor. I'm glad to hear it. Let me ask you 22 about a young man from my state. This is Travis 23 Wolfe who's 12 years old when he was killed just 24 over a year ago by an illegal migrant who mowed 25 him down, and I choose my words carefully, mowed</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p>
<p>1 proactively helping these individuals that needed 2 the resources to secure their systems.</p> <p>3 SENATOR HASSAN: Well, I appreciate 4 that. I'm way over time. There were very few 5 requirements purposely in that grant program 6 other than to make sure the money was being spent 7 the way we authorized. But let's continue to 8 talk about that.</p> <p>9 GOVERNOR NOEM: Thank you.</p> <p>10 SENATOR HASSAN: Thank you.</p> <p>11 SENATOR JOHNSON: Senator Hawley.</p> <p>12 SENATOR HAWLEY: Thank you, Mr. 13 Chairman. Governor Noem, welcome. 14 Congratulations on your nomination. I'm 15 delighted to see you here. I do notice the 16 Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee is over 17 your shoulder there. I have to question your 18 judgment about who your friends are based on that 19 through the great Chairman from the state of 20 Missouri. It's fantastic to have you here.</p> <p>21 The Department of Homeland Security is 22 not particularly old, but you already have the, 23 what I hope, will soon be the distinction of 24 succeeding the worst secretary in the history of 25 the Department of Homeland Security. Alejandro</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p>	<p>1 him down in a motor vehicle, hit him head on 2 doing 75 and a 40, killed him. Others were 3 severely injured. Just yesterday, a witness 4 sitting where you are sitting today told this 5 committee that migrant crime is and I quote, "Not 6 an actual concern." Not an actual concern.</p> <p>7 In a hearing before this committee 8 advising us to drop the Laken Riley act and not 9 focus on migrant crime. In my state with the 10 death of people like Travis Wolfe and Officer 11 David Lee who was assaulted and killed in St. 12 Louis and officers in Kansas City who have been 13 assaulted by illegal migrants and others who have 14 been carjacked and stabbed, would you agree with 15 me that migrant crime sure as heck is an actual 16 concern and that you intend to do something about 17 it?</p> <p>18 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator. 19 Absolutely. And I'm so sorry about Travis. My 20 prayers go out to his family. I can't even 21 imagine what that is like, and thank you for 22 telling his story because there's so many 23 families in this country that have that same 24 story, and they don't understand why the federal 25 government is allowing people to come into this</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 53</p>

<p>1 country illegally and then perpetuate crimes 2 against their people, and then give them 3 resources and shelter and food and debit cards to 4 go take care of their families when they go to 5 work every single day to make sure that they're 6 providing for their families and are held 7 accountable to when they break our laws. 8 SENATOR HAWLEY: Let me ask you this, 9 will you work with President Trump to reinstate 10 the Remain in Mexico program that the President 11 had in place in his first term, which does so 12 much to ensure that those who would seek to abuse 13 our asylum system are not allowed into the 14 country and those who have legitimate asylum 15 claims, their claims are processed in due order 16 and in due course, but they wait in Mexico until 17 those claims are fully processed. Will you work 18 to reinstate that program? 19 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator. The 20 president and I have talked extensively about 21 this, and we'll 100 percent partner with him to 22 reinstate the Remain in Mexico policy and make 23 sure that it's in place. 24 SENATOR HAWLEY: Fantastic. I think 25 Travis might be alive today if that policy had</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator. If 2 confirmed, and I have the opportunity to be 3 secretary on day one, CBP One will be shut down. 4 There's data and information in there that we 5 will preserve so that we can ensure we know who's 6 coming into this country and who's already here 7 that we need to go find. But also, we make sure 8 that there's another program, CHNV, which I'm 9 sure you're very familiar with, where our federal 10 government actually paid to fly people into this 11 country directly from other countries without any 12 vetting or knowing who they are. So, there's 13 several of these programs that need to be 14 eliminated, and we need to ensure that we're 15 following legal immigration laws. 16 SENATOR HAWLEY: I'm glad you just 17 mentioned CHNV. This is a mass parole program. 18 Of course, as you know, our law allows parole in 19 only very limited circumstances. There are two 20 circumstances, and it requires case by case 21 evaluation. The present administration soon to 22 be gone has granted mass parole in direct 23 defiance of the law, not case by case evaluation. 24 The CHNV program is one of those instances. Will 25 you put a stop to this abuse of our parole law</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p>
<p>1 been in place. Let me ask you about CBP One, the 2 phone app, that I've called concierge service for 3 illegal Immigrants. I'm sure you're familiar 4 with it. This was the Biden administration's 5 effort to allow asylum seekers to apply ahead of 6 time using their phones but not actually to 7 provide any evidence that they needed asylum. 8 There is a newspaper report, a press report that 9 said the only problem with the app is it never 10 asks users are you seeking asylum? They don't 11 ask for any asylum evidence. They simply release 12 these so-called asylum seekers who use the app 13 into the country on parole. 14 Sometimes, they're never given a 15 hearing. The Inspector General actually did a 16 report, a full investigation report on CBP One 17 and found that, frequently, users of this app 18 were claiming the same addresses in the United 19 States as their intended destination, even though 20 they didn't know each other, they weren't family 21 connections. In other words, it has been 22 completely abused. And the idea that the federal 23 government would pay for this kind of concierge 24 service for Illegals, I think, is outrageous. 25 Will you end the use of the CBP One app?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p>	<p>1 and our asylum system? 2 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, we will go back to 3 case by case evaluation of these parole cases and 4 ensure that we have more resources, if you will 5 partner with us to make sure that our legal 6 immigration system is fully utilized, that we 7 have more judges, more immigration courts so that 8 we can process people legally and make sure that 9 they are going through that process rather than 10 like Joe Biden has done, use this an excuse to 11 allow people to come into our country with no 12 consequences. 13 SENATOR HAWLEY: Let me ask you about 14 another low light, not a highlight, but a low 15 light of this last administration and DHS. Your 16 predecessor, the current secretary of DHS, 17 established a disinformation board using taxpayer 18 resources to police speech on the internet and 19 elsewhere to tag American citizens' viewpoints as 20 either legitimate or not legitimate and use the 21 power of the state to censor them, including 22 having them removed and perhaps penalized. 23 This has got to be the darkest chapter, 24 I think, in DHS's short history. He eventually 25 withdrew the board under intense criticism but</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p>

<p>1 has never fully repudiated it and never promised 2 not to do it again. Will you pledge to us here 3 today that, under your leadership, there will 4 never be a disinformation board or anything like 5 it at DHS, and you will be a champion for the 6 free speech and first amendment rights of all 7 Americans?</p> <p>8 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, there will not 9 be a board such as that under my leadership at 10 the Department of Homeland Security.</p> <p>11 SENATOR HAWLEY: Fantastic. Let me ask 12 you my remaining seconds, just one more thing 13 about the Secret Service. You've mentioned this, 14 and I'm so glad that you did this committee. And 15 it has been bipartisan. This committee has done 16 bipartisan work on the attempted assassinations 17 or the assassination attempts, I should perhaps 18 say, of the former president, the future 19 president, soon to be the president, President 20 Trump. We were stymied at every turn, and I 21 should use the present tense. We are currently 22 being stymied at every turn by the current Secret 23 Service leadership and, frankly, by the 24 leadership of DHS who have refused to turn over 25 documents who refused to make people available</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p>	<p>1 it was a bipartisan report, an investigation that 2 this committee conducted. And I appreciate you 3 focusing on that, and I'll work with you to get 4 the information so that you have the truth of 5 really what happened there in the failures so 6 they can be fixed.</p> <p>7 SENATOR HAWLEY: Thank you. That's a 8 great place to end in a high note as I see my 9 friend, Senator Blumenthal, who did fantastic 10 work on this effort, and it will be an incredible 11 new day and incredibly refreshing day to have a 12 DHA secretary who will tell us the truth, who 13 will be honest with us about the facts, honest 14 with the American people and who will enforce our 15 law. And I know you'll do that. Governor Noem, 16 I look forward to supporting your nomination. 17 Congratulations.</p> <p>18 GOVERNOR NOEM: Thank you.</p> <p>19 SENATOR JOHNSON: Senator Blumenthal.</p> <p>20 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Thanks, Senator 21 Johnson. Welcome, Governor Noem. And thank you 22 for being here. Thank you for visiting with me 23 and thank you to your family for their service as 24 well. Let me begin on a high note thanking 25 Senator Hawley for his leadership on the effort</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p>
<p>1 for interviews.</p> <p>2 We finally had to pass my own law in 3 this committee, which we unanimously adopted a 4 law statute, mind you, which would require DHS 5 and Secret Service to turn over relevant 6 information to us about the assassination 7 attempts. It's unbelievable. When you come to 8 office to this office, I hope very soon will you 9 pledge to us that you will open the books on all 10 of the facts associated and around these 11 assassination attempts that you will make 12 available to us and to the public, most 13 importantly, all the facts so that we can ensure 14 that this never happens again and that the needed 15 reforms in the Secret Service are put into 16 effect.</p> <p>17 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah. Senator, if I am 18 the Secretary of Homeland Security, I will 19 certainly work with you to build transparency and 20 make sure the facts are shared with you and your 21 committee. I know that you've been very 22 frustrated by the lack of transparency from the 23 department. And I want to thank those of you 24 that have worked on that report that was put 25 together on these assassination attempts. I know</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p>	<p>1 that I led with him to essentially get some basic 2 facts out of the Secret Service when we were 3 investigating Senator Johnson and I as leaders of 4 the permanent subcommittee on investigation, 5 helping you lead it with the Chairman and ranking 6 member here.</p> <p>7 And I'm hoping that you've read our 8 report and that you will agree to begin 9 implementing its recommendations, which call for 10 major reforms, in my view, a house cleaning top 11 to bottom in the Secret Service and greater 12 transparency with this committee and with the 13 American public.</p> <p>14 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, sir. I will 15 certainly work with you to do that and to work to 16 make sure that we have that transparency, and the 17 committee has the information that it needs to do 18 due diligence of its oversight.</p> <p>19 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Our investigation 20 is continuing, Senator Johnson, and I have 21 discussed it. And we will be making more 22 requests to pursue the fact-finding that is so 23 important. I want to ask you about disaster 24 relief. California is on fire. The fire's 25 raging. There are going to leave destruction and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 61</p>

<p>1 devastation that is heartbreaking.</p> <p>2 I am really disappointed with some of</p> <p>3 the statements that President-elect Trump has</p> <p>4 made, for example, saying that quote, "We won't</p> <p>5 give him," referring to Governor Newsom, "money</p> <p>6 to put out all his fires. And if we don't give</p> <p>7 him money to put out fires, he's got.</p> <p>8 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: ... a problem.</p> <p>9 The specter is there of potential discrimination</p> <p>10 based on politics, withholding money from</p> <p>11 California or other states. It's not an</p> <p>12 unfounded fear. In the last administration,</p> <p>13 there were public reports about President Trump</p> <p>14 withholding money from the State of Washington</p> <p>15 because of his disagreements with Governor</p> <p>16 Inslee. Connecticut, like the rest of the</p> <p>17 nation, suffers from these natural disasters.</p> <p>18 Most recently in August, we were hit by major</p> <p>19 flooding, and these natural disasters are going</p> <p>20 to become more frequent, as will be the need for</p> <p>21 the federal government to meet the requests for</p> <p>22 declarations of natural disaster. I assume you</p> <p>23 will agree with me that withholding disaster</p> <p>24 relief by President Trump or any other chief</p> <p>25 executive of the United States is a violation of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 that's a yes.</p> <p>2 GOVERNOR NOEM: I don't speak to</p> <p>3 hypotheticals, which is what you're asking me to</p> <p>4 do. But what I will tell you is that as</p> <p>5 secretary, I will do the same. I will deliver</p> <p>6 the programs as the laws dictate.</p> <p>7 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Well, it's more</p> <p>8 than a hypothetical, with all due respect, and I</p> <p>9 apologize for interrupting you, but my time is</p> <p>10 limited, as you know, as a veteran of these</p> <p>11 hearings. It's more than a hypothetical. It's</p> <p>12 based on experience with President Trump</p> <p>13 withholding money from Washington State and</p> <p>14 elsewhere. I need to know from you, will you</p> <p>15 stand up to the President and say, "No, the</p> <p>16 Constitution and the Impoundment Act requires us,</p> <p>17 for example, to allocate the 100 billion dollars</p> <p>18 that we have just appropriated in the last</p> <p>19 session to states like Connecticut \$3 million,</p> <p>20 Texas, \$10 million, almost every one of the</p> <p>21 states represented here." Will you say no to the</p> <p>22 President if he withholds that money?</p> <p>23 GOVERNOR NOEM: Sir, I don't know about</p> <p>24 the scenarios that you're referencing with</p> <p>25 President Trump, but what I will tell you is that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 64</p>
<p>1 his duty and of law.</p> <p>2 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, Senator</p> <p>3 leadership has consequences and looking at the</p> <p>4 tragedy that's happening in California is --</p> <p>5 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: I want to ask you</p> <p>6 yes or no, with all due respect, it's an easy --</p> <p>7 GOVERNOR NOEM: What's happening in</p> <p>8 California is the ramification of many decisions</p> <p>9 over many years. But under my leadership at the</p> <p>10 Department of Homeland Security, there will be no</p> <p>11 political bias to how disaster relief is</p> <p>12 delivered to the American people.</p> <p>13 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: So, if President</p> <p>14 Trump were to say to you, "We're going to</p> <p>15 withhold money from Connecticut or Michigan or</p> <p>16 any of the states, Iowa, because we don't like</p> <p>17 the governor or we don't like the politics of the</p> <p>18 state," you would stand up to him and say, "Mr.</p> <p>19 president, we need to allocate that money."</p> <p>20 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, in three days,</p> <p>21 President Trump will take an oath to uphold the</p> <p>22 Constitution and the rule of law in this country,</p> <p>23 and he will do that, and I'll be glad to have him</p> <p>24 back.</p> <p>25 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: And I assume</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 63</p>	<p>1 if given the chance to be Secretary of Homeland</p> <p>2 Security, that I will deliver the programs</p> <p>3 according to the law and that it will be done</p> <p>4 with no political bias, and if the programs</p> <p>5 change or if you decide to change the rule of</p> <p>6 law, then I will follow that while adhering to</p> <p>7 the Constitution.</p> <p>8 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: So, you pledge to</p> <p>9 allocate and distribute that 100 billion dollars?</p> <p>10 GOVERNOR NOEM: According to how the</p> <p>11 program is written with no political bias.</p> <p>12 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Thank you.</p> <p>13 GOVERNOR NOEM: Every American deserves</p> <p>14 to be there and have disaster relief the same as</p> <p>15 their neighbors.</p> <p>16 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Basically,</p> <p>17 following the law.</p> <p>18 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes.</p> <p>19 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Let me ask you,</p> <p>20 Senator Peters asked you about homegrown</p> <p>21 terrorists. The New Orleans tragedy was the</p> <p>22 result of a homegrown terrorist born in this</p> <p>23 country radicalized by ISIS and it reflects the</p> <p>24 reason why the intelligence community, the FBI,</p> <p>25 almost all of our law enforcement has said</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 65</p>

<p>1 repeatedly, domestic violent extremism is the 2 most lethal and persistent threat to our 3 security. That terrorist was radicalized by 4 ISIS. The investigation is underway, we don't 5 know all the facts, but we do know that he was a 6 military veteran, and ISIS was responsible for 7 radicalizing him. Shouldn't we focus on ISIS as 8 a threat to this country's security?</p> <p>9 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, certainly we 10 should be focused on all threats to this nation's 11 security. That's the mission of the Department 12 of Homeland Security and homegrown terrorism is 13 growing. We have more and more incidences. The 14 tragedy we saw and the terrorist attack in New 15 Orleans was --</p> <p>16 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: What will you do 17 to combat it? What will you do to stop ISIS and 18 other extremist organization from radicalizing 19 people in this country?</p> <p>20 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, certainly 21 Senator, I'll continue to work with the 22 administration and our partners and the 23 Department of Defense, the intelligence agencies 24 also within Secretary of State and the other 25 branches and cabinet officials to make sure we're</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 66</p>	<p>1 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah, I look forward to 2 working with you.</p> <p>3 SENATOR PAUL: Senator Ernst.</p> <p>4 SENATOR ERNST: Thank you, Senator 5 Johnson. Governor Noem, thank you so much for 6 being here today and I want to thank you for your 7 continuing service, the service that you had as a 8 member of Congress, the service that you have 9 displayed as a governor of the great State of 10 South Dakota, our neighbor to the northwest, and 11 for being willing to step up and take on this 12 immense responsibility. So, thank you so very 13 much.</p> <p>14 We had such a good discussion when you 15 came to my office in the last several weeks, and 16 we talked about the importance of securing our 17 border and fixing our broken immigration system. 18 And I'd like to start today by sharing a story 19 about one of my constituents from Council Bluffs, 20 Iowa. And what we have seen through this broken 21 border is tragedy that strikes so many families 22 across the United States. So, very similar to 23 the story that was shared by my colleague from 24 Missouri with his constituent Mr. Wolf. I have a 25 young woman by the name of Sarah Root who</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 68</p>
<p>1 bringing all resources to bear to identify and to 2 stop these types of terrorist activities. What I 3 would say is the cybersecurity and intelligence 4 elements that we have within the Department of 5 Homeland Security have been incredibly siloed. 6 They have not communicated with other 7 intelligence agencies like they should and 8 partnered. INA has some interaction but not 9 enough and we also need to have CISA have 10 interaction with the FBI, CIA to make sure 11 they're working together to stop these types of 12 threats and identify when they're growing among 13 our citizens and how they become radicalized.</p> <p>14 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: My time has 15 expired. This area of questioning I think is 16 supremely important. I know there's a lot of 17 focus on the border. We all want more border 18 security. We want to stop migrant crime, but 19 let's not take our eye off the ball. The 20 governor of Louisiana for the Super Bowl ought to 21 be really riveted on the potential for homegrown 22 terrorism as a threat, and I hope that you will 23 help him and other governors to do their duty to 24 protect the people of the United States from that 25 homegrown terrorist threat. Thank you.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 67</p>	<p>1 encountered tragedy on January 31st, 9 years ago. 2 So, Sarah Root was struck and killed by an 3 illegal immigrant who was drunk driving. He was 4 driving at three times the legal limit of 5 alcohol, and Sarah's killer was bonded out, 6 bonded out before the Roots laid her to rest. He 7 fled the country and has not been seen or heard 8 from since. The Root family has not seen 9 justice. So, Governor, how do you plan to 10 prioritize the detention and deportation of 11 illegal immigrants like Sarah's killer?</p> <p>12 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, yes, Senator, 13 thank you for telling Sarah's story. I remember 14 when this happened because it was so close to 15 home and so devastating for her and her family 16 and the entire State of Iowa and our country. 17 President Trump is focused on making sure that 18 these types of situations don't happen again, 19 that we don't continue to lose our children and 20 our family members to illegal immigrants that 21 come in and perpetuate crime with no 22 accountability and then are released with no 23 consequences. So, the number one priority of the 24 president is to secure the border and to deport 25 these criminal actors immediately and as soon as</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 69</p>

<p>1 possible. They will be the number one priority 2 to make our communities safer and so that we 3 don't have this kind of situation going forward. 4 In fact, people, I think when they 5 first heard my name being mentioned and nominated 6 for the Department of Homeland Security, maybe 7 thought it was a little bit of a surprise, like, 8 "Oh, I didn't think about Kristi doing that job." 9 But I tell people the reason that I asked for it 10 is because I knew it was the President's number 11 one priority. I knew that it needed to have 12 someone in the position that would do what the 13 President promised the American people, would be 14 strong enough to do it and follow through to make 15 sure that we're protecting our communities and 16 America. But that also came at it from a 17 perspective of how these families feel, that was 18 a wife and a mom and a grandmother and would be 19 able to stand up and communicate to the American 20 people what we were doing and why we were, 21 because it's what they asked us to do. 22 I have three grandchildren and one more 23 on the way, and when I look at Little Miss Addie 24 every day, I just think, "What kind of a country 25 is she going to grow up in? What kind of a</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 70</p>	<p>1 making sure that any communications are secured, 2 any work is secured. And to that, I know the 3 Biden Administration has put a huge emphasis on 4 the cyber bureaucracy, but they haven't really 5 done anything about it, and they haven't given 6 any authority to those that are enforcing the 7 standards. So, we need to enforce the standards 8 that are set forth to make sure the cyber 9 security is truly there, but what can DHS do one, 10 with telework how do we get the employees back, 11 and then two, how do we make sure that our 12 systems are secure from these cyber-attacks? 13 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, Senator, thank 14 you for focusing on remote work and the need to 15 get people back in their offices and accountable 16 to the work that they do. In fact, I've heard 17 since being nominated for this position that many 18 of the agencies within the department are not 19 showing up. They're not doing their jobs. But 20 even FEMA, who is responsible for disaster 21 response, that they have the alternative, some of 22 these employees do not even respond to a 23 disaster, which might explain the horrific 24 results that we saw in North Carolina when they 25 had such a terrible disaster that impacted</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 72</p>
<p>1 country will we leave her and her brother and a 2 sister?" And I don't want them to think that 3 their grandma sat on the sidelines and didn't do 4 all that she could. So, I will enforce the 5 Constitution and the law, and I will make sure 6 that when people enact horrific things like this 7 that happened to Sarah and her family, that there 8 will be consequences for it. 9 SENATOR ERNST: Yeah, absolutely. And 10 as a fellow grandma, I know that you are 11 perfectly positioned to enforce this. 12 I do want to move on to another topic 13 that we visited about in my office. So, I'm the 14 founder and the chair of the DOGE Senate Caucus, 15 and so we do need greater government efficiency, 16 and I do believe in order to do that, we need 17 less of our employees teleworking and more of 18 those government workers back in the office 19 working for our constituents. And to that end, 20 it ties together then too. We just found out 21 that the Treasury Department had a cyber-attack 22 on December 8th from China, and no surprise here, 23 they access servers through work from home 24 software. So, it all ties together. 25 We need more people back in the offices</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 71</p>	<p>1 families and communities, and FEMA failed them so 2 miserably. If It's not even responsibility of 3 them to show up when terrible things happen, what 4 other day-to-day activities are not getting done 5 because they're working from home or not doing 6 their job at all? 7 You talked about cyber security and the 8 need to ensure that our systems are safe and 9 secure. One of the things that disturbs me the 10 most is that we don't necessarily even know how 11 some of these espionage attacks that have 12 infiltrated our systems have happened. We don't 13 know how to stop them yet. We don't have the 14 knowledge and that our departments and 15 intelligence agencies and cybersecurity agencies 16 have become siloed and aren't working together to 17 stay in front of these bad actors. But many 18 times, our most vulnerable area happens at the 19 state and local level. Some of these smaller 20 entities that feeds information into our systems 21 is where they choose to infiltrate and get our 22 data and to really hold for ransom many of these 23 companies and then impact our federal systems as 24 well. 25 So, one of the first meetings I had</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 73</p>

<p>1 when I was elected governor with the former 2 governor during the transition was, he said, "The 3 number one priority you're going to have as 4 governor is to secure our systems." 5 SENATOR ERNST: Yes. 6 GOVERNOR NOEM: He said, "Our systems 7 are so antiquated, and we've had over 16,000 8 hacking attempts in just the last month. You 9 need to secure our systems to get it done." So, 10 that was a priority for me and to do that, and we 11 fully funded it and got it done in South Dakota 12 and it's being implemented today. I look forward 13 to doing that at the federal level to make sure 14 that people's data and information is safe, but 15 also our country is safe from these bad actors 16 that have a plan to take us out. 17 SENATOR ERNST: Well, thank you. My 18 time has expired, but I do want to end on a note 19 that another thing that I do truly appreciate 20 about you and your nomination is that as a 21 governor, you have worked with those local 22 constituencies as well and those local 23 governments, and I know that this will be an 24 incredible strength that will ensure continued 25 success for you within the department. So, thank</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 74</p>	<p>1 that he's in charge of our nation's borders. So, 2 I guess, again, I'd just like to go back to you. 3 How are you going to work with Mr. Homan? What 4 is the division there? I'm trying to get a 5 better sense of who's in charge. 6 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah. Tom Homan is an 7 incredible human being who has over 30 years of 8 experience at the border and the insight and 9 wisdom and he -- 10 SENATOR KIM: Incredible experience, I 11 get that. I'm just trying to think through 12 decision-making process when it comes to your 13 work. For instance, will he be giving orders 14 directly to CBP, ICE, USCIS? 15 GOVERNOR NOEM: Tom Homan has a direct 16 line to the President. He is an advisor to the 17 President, the border Czar. I, obviously, will 18 be if nominated and confirmed and put into the 19 position of being the Department of Homeland 20 Security Secretary and responsible for the 21 authorities that we have and the actions that we 22 take. 23 SENATOR KIM: I say this because I 24 actually want to make sure that we're empowering 25 the next Secretary of Homeland Security.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 76</p>
<p>1 you, Governor, very much. Thank you, Mr. Chair. 2 SENATOR PAUL: Senator Kim. 3 SENATOR KIM: Thank you, Chairman. 4 Governor, it's good to see you. 5 GOVERNOR NOEM: Good to see you again 6 too. 7 SENATOR KIM: Thanks for coming before 8 our committee. I wanted to just ask you not just 9 about your work, but how it's going to fit into 10 the broader incoming Trump Administration and 11 particular, I guess, I'm uncertain about roles 12 and responsibilities regarding your position and 13 Tom Homan's. I guess, I just want to ask you 14 just point-blank who's going to be in charge of 15 the border? 16 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, the president 17 will be in charge of the border. It's a national 18 security issue, and the president is in charge of 19 this country and has made a promise to the 20 American people, and we will fulfill his agenda. 21 SENATOR KIM: Well, that was a good 22 answer, it's the answer I would've given as well, 23 but I guess I got confused. When Trump made the 24 announcement about Tom Homan, he said, "I'm 25 pleased to announce that Tom Homan," and said</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 75</p>	<p>1 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes. 2 SENATOR KIM: In the legislation that 3 was codified by Congress and moved forward that 4 started this after September 11th, said "All 5 functions of all offices, employees and 6 organizational units of the department are vested 7 in the secretary." So, I guess the reason why I 8 mentioned this is I've just seen some quotes from 9 Mr. Homan where he said, "I'll be making 10 decisions on border security and deportation." 11 He was asked in another interview about the 12 stronger role that he'll play, and he said, 13 "Absolutely, I'll be making decisions on how we 14 do the border." 15 So, I just raise that as a concern of 16 mine because not only is that about the function 17 of our executive branch, but also the 18 capabilities of this committee to be able to 19 properly do our constitutional duties for 20 oversight. The ability for us to be able to have 21 that conversation. We can talk to you, engage 22 with you, that is the direct way, but if he is 23 going to be making decisions, then he should come 24 before this committee as well. And I know that 25 that's something where, as far as I know, his</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 77</p>

<p>1 role will be directly at the White House, is not 2 something that will be under the purview directly 3 of this committee. So, I just wanted to raise 4 those concerns.</p> <p>5 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah, yeah. Tom and I 6 work very well together and talk and communicate 7 all the time, and we'll be working together on a 8 daily basis when we're in our positions under the 9 new administration. And I would say there's no 10 authorities being planned to be taken away from 11 the department or myself if I'm in the role, and 12 we'll continue to oversee CPP --</p> <p>13 SENATOR KIM: But it sends some mixed 14 signals. You can understand how people in my 15 home state, maybe around the country, when they 16 hear Mr. Homan saying, "I'm making the 17 decisions." When they hear President-elect Trump 18 say he's in charge of our border. So, I urge 19 that we're going to try to do our best to try to 20 make sure we're empowering the department, 21 empowering the next secretary because that's 22 where our laws are invested in our decision- 23 making.</p> <p>24 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah. Well, thank you 25 Senator, and we'll make sure you have all the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 78</p>	<p>1 get into specifics about what organizations that 2 are out there. So, I just wanted to get a sense 3 of your knowledge of the organizations.</p> <p>4 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, sir. You have all 5 the traditional terrorist organizations that have 6 always threatened the United States, but I would 7 also say --</p> <p>8 SENATOR KIM: Such as?</p> <p>9 GOVERNOR NOEM: I would say Hamas, 10 ISIS, continuing down that path of those 11 terrorist organizations. But we'll continue to 12 also focus though not just on those, but also the 13 cartels, their partnership with the Chinese and 14 what they are doing. Listen, I've told people 15 for years, for over 30 years, I've worked on 16 national policy, on food policy, on agriculture 17 policy, and I've seen the Chinese agenda to 18 infiltrate our country, control our food supply 19 chain, but also their manipulation of their 20 currency and stealing our IP. And now I believe 21 that this fentanyl crisis that they have flooded 22 our country with is geared and the purpose of it 23 is to kill our next generation of Americans. It 24 is to control us.</p> <p>25 SENATOR KIM: No, I don't discount the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 80</p>
<p>1 information that you need. And Tom working 2 directly with the president and I working 3 directly with the president, hope to help you get 4 all that you need to reassured that the 5 authorities will stay the same as they currently 6 are, but we will continue to work to secure that 7 border and make sure that we're working together 8 in that way.</p> <p>9 SENATOR KIM: I want to just switch 10 gears about you raised the concerns about 11 terrorism, especially foreign terrorist groups. 12 I guess I just want to ask you, what are the 13 major foreign terrorist groups that are... Well, 14 first of all, what are the major foreign 15 terrorist groups that are out there that we're 16 tracking, which are the ones that are concerns to 17 us in terms of potentially trying to inspire or 18 coordinate an attack upon us? And if you can, 19 just give me a sense of what their current 20 capabilities are to try to enact that.</p> <p>21 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, I think we face a 22 lot of threats, Senator, and since I'm not in the 23 role today, I shouldn't get into specifics with 24 you, but I think over years the --</p> <p>25 SENATOR KIM: Well, you can at least</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 79</p>	<p>1 importance of those --</p> <p>2 GOVERNOR NOEM: So, when you focus on 3 one or two groups, I think it takes your eye off 4 the ball as to where all the threats could come 5 from. We just spent a significant amount of time 6 talking about homegrown terrorism as well and 7 about --</p> <p>8 SENATOR KIM: Correct. And I'm glad 9 we're having that conversation. But the reason 10 why I mentioned it, I was not trying to quiz you 11 or anything of that nature. It's just that when 12 the Department of Homeland Security, when their 13 threat assessment for 2025 lists three 14 organizations, lists Al Qaeda, lists ISIS, in 15 particular ISIS Khorasan, and the IRGC, and the 16 threat from Iran, I just want to make sure that I 17 get it. You're talking about the importance of 18 the border. We all understand that we want to 19 work with the incoming administration to try to 20 have an orderly process with that. But I just 21 want to make sure in particular with DHS, the 22 primary mission, if we look at the founding 23 legislation, the primary mission, the very first 24 mission is prevent terrorist attacks within the 25 United States and do everything we can to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 81</p>

<p>1 minimize that type of threat. 2 So, yes, I do think it's important for 3 us to focus in on one, two, or three or just 4 wherever these terrorist groups are at. Yes, 5 yes, I know that part of that effort to try to 6 minimize terrorist attacks is through the work 7 that we try to do to secure our borders, all of 8 them: air, sea, and land. But the primary 9 mission still is about preventing terrorism, not 10 just the border security. That's a tool to be 11 able to accomplish that. So, I just raised that 12 with you. I want to make sure that the next 13 Homeland Security Secretary has a very detailed 14 knowledge and understanding about the terrorist 15 groups, their capabilities, and is tracking that 16 on a absolute daily basis, and that they 17 understand that is their top mission. And with 18 that, I'll yield back to the Chairman. 19 SENATOR PAUL: Senator Johnson. 20 SENATOR JOHNSON: Governor Noem, 21 welcome and thank you -- 22 GOVERNOR NOEM: Thank you. 23 SENATOR JOHNSON: ... for your 24 willingness to serve. You'll be taking over a 25 massive federal government agency, 240,000</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 82</p>	<p>1 been a big topic of conversation in most of the 2 meetings that I've had with the members of this 3 committee was how do we fix this agency which the 4 reputation is that it's broken and dysfunctional. 5 I think that was the question I get asked the 6 most is why would you want to head up such a 7 dysfunctional department? And I would say that 8 because the mission of the department is to 9 secure the homeland and our people, it's our 10 biggest vulnerability right now, and we have a 11 president that's not enforcing the law, and I 12 don't believe the law should be unequally 13 applied. Everyone should be subject to our laws, 14 and a nation without laws and without borders is 15 not a nation at all. So, I will work by ensuring 16 one of the things that Senator Ernst talked 17 about, people have to show up for work. 18 I think there's going to be a majority 19 of people who don't have their primary mission to 20 secure the homeland, that if they don't want to 21 show up for work, then maybe they're just not 22 truly passionate about protecting America. I 23 think they need to do that, and they need to 24 recognize what their job is. The morale in DHS 25 is very low. I'm going to let people do their</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 84</p>
<p>1 employees. It's probably too massive. I think 2 had I been there back then, I don't think I 3 would've assembled these 22 different agencies in 4 this massive department, but that's what we've 5 got. It's a department that the previous 6 administration, I think, has completely misused. 7 Instead of using customs and border protection to 8 do that, to protect our border and secure it, 9 they've utilized those resources to incentivize a 10 massive influx of illegal immigration. Instead 11 of using the Cybersecurity Infrastructure 12 Security Agency to do that, they instead engage 13 in mission creep and utilized it to censor 14 Americans with the misinformation board. I am 15 concerned about disaster relief, just federal 16 disaster relief in general, creating greater and 17 greater and increasing levels of moral hazard 18 resulting in higher costs of these disasters. 19 So, let's cover each one of those kind of in 20 order. How do you gain control over a massive 21 agency whose resources and personnel have been 22 misused? I mean, how do you root out those 23 individuals who instead of securing our border 24 opened it up and facilitated this? 25 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, Senator, this has</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 83</p>	<p>1 jobs. I'm going to remind them what their jobs 2 are. Some of these border patrol agents haven't 3 been able to do their jobs for a very long time. 4 They've been processing paperwork and 5 facilitating an invasion when they should be back 6 securing our border, which is why they were 7 recruited and wanted to serve there to begin 8 with. 9 We're going to build partnerships with 10 local law enforcement, with ICE and task forces. 11 So, we're communicating again with local sheriffs 12 and mayors and law enforcement to partner 13 together. When you talk about the fact that this 14 is such a broken agency that needs so much 15 improvement, a lot of it goes back to why we're 16 recreated and are we fulfilling that mission and 17 making sure that these individuals are getting 18 back on task. 19 SENATOR JOHNSON: So, under my 20 Chairmanship and under the Trump Administration, 21 we did rename a part of DHS, so the Cybersecurity 22 Information Security Agency. I in no way, shape 23 or form ever contemplated that the sub-agency 24 within DHS that was really focused on securing us 25 against the cyber threats and other threats to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 85</p>

<p>1 our infrastructure would ever be used to violate 2 the Constitution the way it was used to violate 3 the Constitution under the Biden Administration. 4 This administration's been completely opaque. We 5 do not have the information to know and the 6 communication in terms of what all happened here. 7 So, my question is relates to how they misused 8 CISA. Will you commit to providing the 9 transparency, providing the information, 10 investigate it yourself, but provide this 11 committee, my subcommittee, the information to 12 expose the truth of the American public, but even 13 more importantly, propose a piece of legislation 14 based on our investigation, based on those 15 results to fix it so that no administration can 16 ever misuse the language of the law to commit 17 that kind of unconstitutional act and violate 18 people's First Amendment rights? 19 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah, Senator, I look 20 forward to working with you on that. And I think 21 what we saw during the COVID pandemic, the 22 actions of CISA, their misinformation and 23 disinformation campaign, the materials they were 24 putting out was shocking. Shocking at what they 25 were doing to decide what was truth, what wasn't,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 86</p>	<p>1 their lives, the hundreds of billions of dollars' 2 worth of property damage. It's not just 3 California though. I mean, again, that was 4 grotesque mismanagement, that could have been 5 prevented. You can't prevent a hurricane, you 6 can't prevent floods, but you certainly can try 7 and start reducing the moral hazard that we've 8 allowed to explode, quite honestly, by the 9 federal government rushing in immediately, no 10 questions asked, just tell us how big a check you 11 want. What can you do in your new role to try 12 and start reducing over time the moral hazard 13 that we have created in this country with federal 14 disaster relief? 15 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, Senator 16 emergencies and disasters are always locally led. 17 They're led by the local communities and leaders, 18 and that's because they're much more responsive 19 and much better informed on how to bring relief 20 and to get those emergency services there to meet 21 the need. Then it's state supported and 22 federally resourced, which means that when we 23 come in that we're supporting what the mission 24 is, what those emergency operations and plans 25 are, that the local city and county, and then</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 88</p>
<p>1 and how they were trying to manipulate the 2 American people. We saw it in elections and 3 Russia influence as well, and so ensuring that 4 they can't do that in the future under any 5 administration would be a priority, that they 6 stay doing what they're supposed to do and 7 hardening our systems and working with local 8 officials to do that is a priority, and I'd look 9 forward to working with you on legislation should 10 you wish to rein them in. 11 SENATOR JOHNSON: So, the first step in 12 that process is to expose the truth to find out 13 who these backed actors were, expose who they 14 were, hold them accountable. 15 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes. 16 SENATOR JOHNSON: I mean, that is 17 crucial that we take that first step. So, again, 18 look forward to working with you on that. The 19 tragedy of the California fires, the more we 20 learn, the more we understand that not only was 21 it predictable, it was predicted, which means it 22 was preventable. Again, you can't prevent the 23 initiation of those fires, but you certainly 24 prevent them from raging into the tragedy that 25 they became, the dozens of people who've lost</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 87</p>	<p>1 also the state has implemented and do what we can 2 to fulfill the mission of our programs. 3 One of the things that FEMA's not doing 4 today that I think we should be doing is 5 streamlining communications. We saw this in New 6 Orleans, we saw it in other terrorist attacks in 7 the country, and you just referenced it as well 8 about the American people not getting the truth, 9 Senators not getting the truth and the 10 transparency that we need is that I believe FEMA 11 can always put out a blueprint for what a 12 response would be should something terrible 13 happen. 14 And when we look at the Secret Service, 15 what happened in Butler, we saw that 16 communication was an issue, that the Secret 17 Service wasn't communicating, and balls were 18 getting dropped with local authorities, local law 19 enforcement, and we can put forward a blueprint 20 for how communication can happen and be 21 streamlined between the federal government, the 22 state, and the local entities. So, that should 23 something happen, this is how we talk to each 24 other, to make sure that the public has the 25 facts, they're not getting misinformation, which</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 89</p>

<p>1 happened with the New Orleans terror attack just 2 recently, but also up in Pennsylvania as well. 3 That blueprint is what we do at the 4 state level that FEMA has failed to do, to 5 proactively educate the public on what 6 everybody's roles are, what we do should 7 something happen, whether it be a natural 8 disaster or a terrorist attack or an emergency 9 response is needed, that we can put out those 10 blueprints ahead of time, educate people, train 11 those local entities, which they currently do to 12 a certain extent today, but not good enough to 13 really know that not only can the resources be 14 pre-deployed in many of these situations so that 15 they're more readily accessible, but also how are 16 we going to communicate and make sure everybody's 17 on the same page so that we can be much more 18 efficient. 19 I wish that we would've had different 20 leadership and a different governor in 21 California, or we might have a different result 22 there. But in the Department of Homeland 23 Security, we can do all that we can to make sure 24 that the people that live in California know that 25 they're going to get a response from the federal</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 90</p>	<p>1 SENATOR GALLEGO: Thank you, Chairman. 2 Thank you, Governor, for your attendance and I 3 appreciate us meeting last week and our frank 4 conversation. So, following up to our 5 conversation, in recent years, I've been in very 6 close contact with our Arizona border 7 communities, which are unlike other border 8 communities and about the funding needs to 9 address migrant influxes through the shelter and 10 services program or SSP. Without this funding 11 border communities must bear all the financial 12 burden for national immigration challenges and 13 the broken border in general. So, that means 14 police, fire, hospital systems in general, 15 anything of that. And at the same time, they'll 16 also face the potential challenges of street 17 releases. And again, these are very small towns 18 on the border, so having thousands of people 19 being released becomes both burdensome security 20 issues and just not fair to them. And we get 21 lumped in with places like New York and Chicago 22 about how they do their shelter programs. 23 Our shelter programs are not the same 24 as New York and Chicago. We do not permanently 25 put people in apartments or anything of that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 92</p>
<p>1 government that's appropriate, and we did all 2 that we could to make sure that they had the 3 information ahead of time so they could protect 4 themselves when they do have a failure in 5 leadership like we've seen. 6 SENATOR JOHNSON: Thank you and good 7 luck. 8 GOVERNOR NOEM: You bet. 9 SENATOR PAUL: Since Senator Johnson 10 brought up California fires, I have to interject 11 here. We talked about burn policies, these are 12 local policies, how we try to not have so much 13 brush and things like that. They're also next to 14 the largest body of water in the world, the 15 Pacific Ocean. So, I see these homes all burning 16 on the beach in Malibu, and I'm like, "Wow, if 17 they just had a generator and a hose, you start 18 sucking the water out of the Pacific Ocean." But 19 you could do more than that. You could pump it 20 and put it in cisterns up in the hills a mile or 21 two in. It doesn't rain very much there, but why 22 don't they take the ocean water, put it in 23 cisterns and have a bunch of water ready when a 24 wildfire shows up, but it's like once again, bad 25 local government. Senator Gallego.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 91</p>	<p>1 nature. We are trying to move people away from 2 the border so that way they don't become a burden 3 on these very, very small communities. So, I'm 4 very highly concerned, as I told you in our 5 meeting when the SSP program becomes politicized 6 and to the point where we get lumped in with 7 those programs, I don't think are effective and 8 are actually counterproductive and it ends up 9 depriving our small Arizona borders of these 10 very, very vital funds that they need. So, as 11 DHS Secretary, how would you ensure that border 12 communities are not left to respond to and pay 13 for these immigration influxes, the broken border 14 system on their own? And when you commit to 15 helping really not politicize or just join the 16 SSP program to the point where places that are 17 doing things correctly like Yuma, Arizona, like 18 Pima County, like Cochise County, aren't lumped 19 in with the people that are doing things 20 incorrectly like New York State and Chicago. 21 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, Senator, thank 22 you for the conversation in your office about the 23 program, FEMA, the southern border, and the 24 challenges and then also the difference between 25 your state and how you utilize funds versus other</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 93</p>

<p>1 states. I would say that, my hope is that if 2 given the opportunity to serve as secretary, that 3 the federal government would no longer, and I 4 believe as President Trump has promised the 5 American people facilitate an illegal alien 6 invasion and that your communities in Arizona 7 would no longer have the issue with having people 8 in your small towns and communities that you need 9 to figure out how to take care of and get them to 10 where they want to go in other places of the 11 country.</p> <p>12 The President has promised he will 13 secure the border that we will uphold our 14 nation's laws and that he will do that to the 15 benefit and be putting America first again. So, 16 I know we talked extensively about the SSP 17 program and how you've utilized it, but getting 18 these programs back to what they were intended is 19 important to FEMA as a disaster response agency, 20 and some of the facilities that have been 21 utilizing these types of funds and dollars need 22 to be reevaluated and to make sure that it's 23 truly doing the service that is upholding our 24 nation's laws.</p> <p>25 SENATOR GALLEGOS: And certainly, I</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 94</p>	<p>1 think the mistakes that other states have taken 2 on. Moving on, in Arizona, we have large parts 3 of the board, they run through tribal lands. We 4 have 22 federally recognized tribes. We have 5 great relationships with these tribes. They want 6 to be collaborative partners when it comes to 7 border security. And then we have some great 8 programs that have worked in the past. For 9 example, the Shadow Wolves Program with the 10 Tohono O'odham Nation is a really good example, 11 collaborative program of tribal law enforcement 12 that worked with DHS to make sure they stop human 13 smuggling and cartels going through the borders. 14 But as DHS Secretary, what is your plan to 15 consult with our border tribes and work together 16 to balance both national security but also their 17 sovereignty?</p> <p>18 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah. Well, Senator, I 19 believe that my experience as governor and my 20 relationship with working with our tribes is 21 going to be an incredible powerful tool for me to 22 bring to bear at the Department of Homeland 23 Security to work on how we secure our southern 24 border but still respect their sovereignty and 25 still be able to work with them. This year, when</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 96</p>
<p>1 understand reevaluating especially how some of 2 these states have been using it and in an ideal 3 world, we don't have to have a program like that 4 because we don't have this mass of humanity 5 that's coming towards our borders, but even under 6 the first Trump administration, we actually still 7 needed it also. So, this is why my concern is to 8 not get rid of this program because again, these 9 small communities, I'm talking communities of 10 maybe 10,000 people, maybe only six or seven cops 11 are going to end up really bearing the brunt and 12 we are not a big state. We can't really 13 compensate for these types of losses. These 14 small communities are also largely, you come from 15 a rural state, counties that are largely rural 16 and with a lot of federal land so that actually 17 don't even have a tax base.</p> <p>18 So, when the broken immigration system 19 sends people to these borders and these 20 communities don't have enough money to pay for 21 cops, firefighters over time for hospital 22 systems, it's that type of program that keeps 23 these small communities afloat. So, just want to 24 make sure that again, this doesn't not become 25 politicized and that we are kept separate from I</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 95</p>	<p>1 looking at public safety issues that we had in 2 South Dakota and their lack of ability to hire 3 tribal officers on our reservations in South 4 Dakota, I offered to train federal law 5 enforcement officers, BIA officers, but also 6 their tribal police in South Dakota at no cost to 7 our tribes. And it's been an incredible powerful 8 tool that we've had to build relationships. 9 Those tribal police had the chance to go through 10 academy with the local maybe deputies from the 11 counties and the state highway patrol troopers 12 that were coming on board, and those 13 relationships have built partnerships in our 14 state that we didn't have before.</p> <p>15 The Shadow Wolf training opportunity is 16 incredible. That was down in Arizona that you 17 spoke of too, and in looking into that program, 18 I'd like to continue to build on that and 19 perpetuate in the future so that our tribes have 20 an opportunity to have a secure border but also 21 have it reflect their values and their culture 22 and have their own people be a part of the 23 solution and then even when it comes to the 24 infrastructure of the wall that we're respecting 25 that and their landscapes and their land as well.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 97</p>

<p>1 So, I look forward to working with you as we move 2 into this next administration to be able to 3 protect our country and then work and respect our 4 tribes as we do so.</p> <p>5 SENATOR GALLEGO: Thank you. And the 6 President Trump and some of his other potential 7 staff and advisors have been very vocal about 8 implementing a mass deportation strategy, talking 9 to my agricultural community, my dairy community, 10 they have concerns that this approach will lead 11 to workforce shortages that will further drive up 12 the costs of everything and something that we 13 have really been working hard to cross, I think a 14 bipartisan and a bipartisan manner to bring down 15 the costs of everything and unfortunately this 16 would reignite inflation. What is your plan to 17 ensure safe and legal immigration processes for 18 agricultural workers while protecting local 19 agricultural operations, including those both of 20 our home states?</p> <p>21 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, Senator, the 22 President and President Trump has been very clear 23 that his priority is going to be deporting 24 criminals, those who have broken our laws and 25 perpetuated violence in our communities. That'll</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 98</p>	<p>1 ago today, we met in probably the coldest day 2 I've ever been in my life in Iowa --</p> <p>3 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah, that's true.</p> <p>4 SENATOR MORENO: ... as you and I were 5 making phone calls and whipping up votes for 6 Republicans in Iowa, my wife Bridget, who's here, 7 got a chance to meet you and we left Iowa saying, 8 "That person's really going to go far," and here 9 we are nine years later, you've been an amazing 10 governor, amazing Congresswoman, and now you're 11 going to make an even better Secretary of the 12 Department of Homeland Security. So, I think 13 sometimes in D.C. we tend to complicate things. 14 There is a current Secretary of Homeland 15 Security, so why don't we take this opportunity 16 to do a little job review and compare and 17 contrast him to you. So, if you don't mind, I'll 18 ask you some questions and you can give me an 19 answer. Secretary Mayorkas allowed about, you 20 said it, just about 400 people on the terror 21 watch list to come into this country legally. If 22 you were confirmed as Secretary of Homeland 23 Security, how many people on the terror watch 24 list would you allow into this country?</p> <p>25 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, Senator, we would</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 100</p>
<p>1 be the priority. And as I spoke earlier with our 2 statistics, having over 425,000 of those with 3 criminal convictions in our country, that will be 4 a focus that we need to tackle right away, and 5 it'll be a big one. Beyond that, his next 6 priority is going to be those with final removal 7 orders and focus on those individuals who have 8 long overstayed and that there is a consequence 9 for ignoring our federal laws. Beyond that, 10 we'll continue conversations. As you know, I'm a 11 farmer and a rancher and come from an 12 agricultural state and we'll work together to 13 make sure that laws are followed. It is the 14 Senate and the house that puts forward the laws. 15 I as secretary uphold the law, so you determine 16 what that is and debate and discussion. I'll be 17 transparent and share as much information and 18 insight as I have with my background and 19 experience and continue to work with you.</p> <p>20 SENATOR GALLEGO: (Indiscernible).</p> <p>21 SENATOR PAUL: Senator Moreno.</p> <p>22 SENATOR MORENO: First of all, thank 23 you, Governor, for being here for testifying 24 before this committee and for your service, not 25 just to your state but to America. Nine years</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 99</p>	<p>1 work every single day until that number was zero. 2 And if you look at the previous Trump 3 administration over his entire four years in 4 comparison to Joe Biden's number President Trump, 5 it was 11 that were then removed from the country 6 and faced consequences. When you look at the 382 7 that Joe Biden has let in and the policies 8 continue, is shocking and needs to be changed 9 immediately.</p> <p>10 SENATOR MORENO: Mayorkas let in about 11 12,000 murderers, how many would you target to 12 let into this country?</p> <p>13 GOVERNOR NOEM: My goal every day would 14 be to have no murderers allowed into this country 15 and our communities.</p> <p>16 SENATOR MORENO: Mayorkas allowed 17 16,000 rapists, how many would you target to let 18 in?</p> <p>19 GOVERNOR NOEM: Every day I'd work to 20 make sure that there was none let into this 21 country.</p> <p>22 SENATOR MORENO: He let 600,000 -- 23 Mayorkas, 600,000, people with criminal 24 convictions, how many would you allow in?</p> <p>25 GOVERNOR NOEM: We would work every day</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 101</p>

<p>1 to make sure people are safe and that those with 2 criminal convictions are immediately removed. 3 SENATOR MORENO: How many private jets 4 would you have the United States taxpayers have 5 fly into foreign countries to pick up people to 6 bring them here. 7 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah. Senator, we will 8 no longer be undertaking that mission at the 9 Department of Homeland Security. 10 SENATOR MORENO: So, not 700,000 11 individuals on private jets over the last four 12 years, you would not have any? 13 GOVERNOR NOEM: No. I'll be working 14 with President Trump to put in place his agenda 15 and adherence to our federal laws. 16 SENATOR MORENO: And how many illegals 17 will you plan to house in luxury hotel rooms in 18 Manhattan at a cost of \$6, 000 per month? 19 GOVERNOR NOEM: Sir, clearly, Senator, 20 during this election, the American people said 21 they did not support that and that that would not 22 be a part of this new administration. 23 SENATOR MORENO: How about sex change 24 operations for illegals, how many of those would 25 you suspect you would fund?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 102</p>	<p>1 GOVERNOR NOEM: Oh, Senator, my hope is 2 that that would be true. Yes. 3 SENATOR MORENO: Let's switch to 4 another part of the disgraceful immigration laws 5 that Biden and Mayorkas, who objectively, by the 6 way, objectively, has been the worst cabinet 7 member ever in the history of the United States 8 of America. Let's talk about temporary 9 protective status. Temporary being the operative 10 word. Mayorkas and Biden just extended temporary 11 protective status again through 2027. Will you 12 continue to corrupt TPS to allow some sort of 13 open borders agenda and will you use hot weather 14 of 80 degrees and sunny beaches in El Salvador as 15 a reason why people have to stay in America and 16 not safely return? 17 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah, Senator, this 18 program has been abused and manipulated by the 19 Biden administration and that will no longer be 20 allowed to allow that and these extensions going 21 forward the way that they are, the program was 22 intended to be temporary and this extension of 23 over 600,000 Venezuelans as well is alarming when 24 you look at what we've seen in different states, 25 including Colorado with gangs doing damage and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 104</p>
<p>1 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, I believe that 2 the Department of Homeland Security will be 3 reevaluating its mission in this country to not 4 allow that going forward under President Trump's 5 goals. 6 SENATOR MORENO: And if you had any 7 legal migrant that was in this country and they 8 committed a crime, would you offer them airfare 9 from one state to another to evade law 10 enforcement? 11 GOVERNOR NOEM: Sir, I will be 12 following this nation's laws and the Constitution 13 and make sure that all laws are adhered to. 14 SENATOR MORENO: And if you had been 15 the head of the Department of Homeland Security a 16 year or so ago, would you have closed a detention 17 center in Georgia that would've allowed the 18 release of somebody charged with a crime? 19 GOVERNOR NOEM: Sir, I don't have the 20 specifics to that situation, but certainly that 21 would not be something that I would want to have 22 under my watch. 23 SENATOR MORENO: So, just to be clear, 24 Laken Riley would be alive today if you had been 25 the Secretary of Homeland Security?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 103</p>	<p>1 harming the individuals and the people that live 2 there. 3 SENATOR MORENO: And in terms of our 4 border, like the physical border, I've been there 5 many times. You've been there many times. Who 6 should be in charge? Who should have operational 7 control of our border? The United States 8 government or the Mexican drug cartels? 9 GOVERNOR NOEM: Oh, Senator, the United 10 States needs to control our borders and secure 11 them. 12 SENATOR MORENO: So, if this were a job 13 interview in the private sector and you had 14 somebody like Alejandro Mayorkas in charge and we 15 had the opportunity to upgrade to you, this would 16 be the greatest upgrade in history of the United 17 States of America. But I'm going to end my time 18 with a startling statistic and actually a 19 challenge to the Democrat party. When Mayorkas 20 was confirmed, every single Democrat voted to 21 confirm him, and six Republicans joined all 50 22 Democrats in that confirmation. If we get to the 23 vote, and hopefully Chairman, we could do that 24 Monday, because we cannot wait one single day 25 without you being in charge of that department.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 105</p>

<p>1 We should have 100 percent; 100 Senators vote for 2 your confirmation.</p> <p>3 This will be the litmus test in my mind 4 as to whether we have a Democrat party that's 5 actually serious about doing bipartisan things 6 like securing this country and protecting our 7 citizens. Any Democrat that voted for Mayorkas 8 that does not vote for you should be in front of 9 their voters and removed from office. Thank you 10 for serving, Brian. Thank you for being here, 11 for putting up with the nonsense that you guys 12 have had to put up with over the years. You are 13 going to make an amazing Secretary of Homeland 14 Security. Thank you for being here.</p> <p>15 GOVERNOR NOEM: Thank you, Senator.</p> <p>16 SENATOR PAUL: Senator Slotkin.</p> <p>17 SENATOR SLOTKIN: Thanks for being here 18 and thanks for our time in my office, Governor. 19 I'm a former CIA officer, joined right after 9/11 20 and served three tours in Iraq alongside the 21 military. I'm actually the first CIA officer in 22 the Senate and to me the most important thing 23 again as a Democrat from a state that Trump won, 24 right, on the same ballot we both won. I 25 understand we're going to have different policy</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 106</p>	<p>1 very elite military unit. I mean, it's horrible. 2 It's one of the hardest things to catch the sort 3 of lone wolf, radicalized American citizen, but I 4 want to protect ourselves. Our most recent 5 examples of domestic terrorism we're not what 6 we've spent the majority talking about today, 7 crime from a migrant, and I don't dispute there 8 is crime, but I just want to know and I want to 9 hear from you as an intelligence officer that 10 you're going to speak about real threats and not 11 blow something up, politicize something, make 12 something more exciting because that's maybe what 13 the President wants to hear, but your mission to 14 protect and defend the Constitution means calling 15 honestly what the threats are to the country. 16 Can you just give me a yes or no, please?</p> <p>17 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator. I will 18 be as transparent and factual every day with you 19 and the American people as possible based on the 20 information that I have. I don't know if the 21 investigations are closed in New Orleans and in 22 Nevada, but what we know so far and needs to be 23 relayed to the American people, needs to be the 24 truth and facts.</p> <p>25 SENATOR SLOTKIN: Yeah, I'd ask that.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 108</p>
<p>1 opinions. I certainly understand that the 2 President or incoming President has the right to 3 nominate whoever he wants. Those are not the 4 issues for me that I'm going to spend my time on. 5 The ones that I care about the most relate to the 6 mission of the organization when it was founded, 7 protecting the homeland, and I think to me, it's 8 one thing when there's campaign rhetoric or 9 political politicization of things, everyone does 10 that on both sides of the aisle in this committee 11 and in our line of work, but when it comes to 12 actually protecting the country, you do have to 13 be clear and honest about facts and not conflate 14 things.</p> <p>15 So, it's just important to me that I 16 know, particularly since you do have one of the 17 intelligence agencies within the Department of 18 Homeland Security, that you're going to call a 19 spade a spade, right? The most recent acts of 20 domestic terrorism in New Orleans, horrible 21 incident in Nevada had nothing to do with 22 migrants. Correct?</p> <p>23 GOVERNOR NOEM: Correct.</p> <p>24 SENATOR SLOTKIN: They were homegrown 25 American citizens. One of them was actually in a</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 107</p>	<p>1 We've talked a lot about border security. As a 2 CIA officer, I think one of the only people on 3 this committee who's actually worked on 4 protecting the homeland. I'm a Middle East 5 terrorism and militia expert by training, so I 6 believe deeply in it and every country of the 7 world gets to decide who comes inside its 8 borders. That's not a radical concept, but I 9 think I've been open with this committee that it 10 is also on us to fix the deeply broken legal 11 immigration system. I'm glad to hear that you're 12 going to carry out the laws on the immigration 13 system. Democrats and Republicans are to blame 14 that we haven't fixed this system, but I also 15 believe you can't fully control the border unless 16 you give people that we need for our companies, 17 for our economy a legal vetted way to come here. 18 So, do you believe in legal vetted immigration 19 and that we need more of it in the United States?</p> <p>20 GOVERNOR NOEM: I do believe we need to 21 follow our legal immigration laws and that it 22 needs to be vetted. We need more resources, I 23 believe in some of the elements of this to ensure 24 that we're --</p> <p>25 SENATOR SLOTKIN: Do you believe that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 109</p>

<p>1 our economy depends and needs some level, just 2 like your family came from Norway and on economic 3 drive and wanted a better life -- 4 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, immigration's 5 always been a part of our history and will be a 6 part of our future. We just need to make sure 7 that we're adhering to our nation's laws, which 8 this body has the ability to -- 9 SENATOR SLOTKIN: I'm with you, I'm 10 with you. 11 GOVERNOR NOEM: ... continue to change 12 and to put in place. 13 SENATOR SLOTKIN: Again, going back to 14 the fact that you will pledge an oath to the 15 Constitution, not to President Trump. Just like 16 every other nominee, President Trump said in 17 November that he's willing to use law 18 enforcement, National Guard, or even active-duty 19 military to go after the threat from within the 20 United States. I don't know exactly what he was 21 talking about, but we have recent examples from 22 your predecessors at DHS where federal law 23 enforcement were sent into a state, in this case 24 Oregon without coordination with the governor. 25 Those federal law enforcement officers at the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 110</p>	<p>1 SENATOR SLOTKIN: I just to know you're 2 a former governor, you can imagine that if Joe 3 Biden sent in 700 federal law enforcement under 4 Secretary Mayorkas without coordinating with you, 5 I think we can agree you'd be a little upset. 6 So, I just ask that you give the same respect for 7 coordination and that we are very sensitive. 8 People are worried about politicizing of law 9 enforcement and the uniformed military. That's a 10 bad thing. I hope we can agree. Lastly, I will 11 just say, look forward to looking at the northern 12 border, the Gordie Howe Bridge, your help 13 staffing that. We know you are right now across 14 many administrations, we haven't met our staffing 15 goals at DHS and that's a problem, so we really 16 want to make sure that opens on time. 17 But I also want your assurances. You 18 received FEMA assistance from Joe Biden's 19 administration, right? You had historic floods. 20 You asked and requested of the administration, 21 and you were given millions of dollars to help 22 with that. I understand you don't like Gavin 23 Newsom, but can you say in front of the American 24 people that you will open the books to this 25 committee who does have oversight over FEMA, that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 112</p>
<p>1 time were putting down threats to federal 2 buildings and they were legitimate threats. I 3 don't dispute, there was destruction of property 4 going on during a bunch of protests and riots, so 5 I don't dispute that. But they weren't wearing 6 insignia. We talked about this. They weren't 7 wearing any markings, so people were arrested by 8 folks in fatigues with no names, no idea who they 9 were, like right out of a bad Hollywood movie. 10 Okay. If the President asks you to send in 11 federal law enforcement to a state without 12 coordination of that, Governor, would you support 13 that action? 14 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, my job, if 15 nominated, and sworn in as Secretary of Homeland 16 Security, is to uphold the Constitution and to 17 uphold -- 18 SENATOR SLOTKIN: So, you will push 19 back -- 20 GOVERNOR NOEM: ... the rules of this 21 country. Yes, that will be the oath and the 22 pledge that I will be making. And my goal also 23 is to work with you to ensure that we have 24 situations that are always appropriate, that we 25 are well-defined on who we are --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 111</p>	<p>1 you will open the books in a bipartisan way to 2 ensure whether it's North Carolina or California 3 or anywhere in between, that the American people 4 can know that you are not playing politics with 5 disaster assistance? 6 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes. Senator, I'll 7 work with you in this committee to make sure I'm 8 following the federal law and ensuring that you 9 have information and transparency from us and 10 from DHS and FEMA. 11 SENATOR SLOTKIN: Thank you. 12 Appreciate it. Yield back. 13 SENATOR PAUL: Senator Lankford. 14 SENATOR LANKFORD: Governor Noem, great 15 to see you. 16 GOVERNOR NOEM: Great to see you too. 17 SENATOR LANKFORD: Thanks for being 18 here. Thanks for accepting this nod that the 19 President has given you. For, Brian, thanks. 20 Both of you, you've walked through a lot. I have 21 had the privilege of knowing you for a very long 22 time since we served together in the House of 23 Representatives, so I have the benefit of knowing 24 your qualifications and how strong you are in all 25 these background issues and how hard you work on</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 113</p>

<p>1 these things because I've seen it firsthand. So, 2 I appreciate you stepping into this because a lot 3 of attention across the country will be focused 4 on this. You know that full well and you've 5 stepped into it. For Governor Landry, my state 6 and many folks in my state are praying for you 7 and for your state. You've done a great job in 8 leadership at this moment in a very, very tough 9 time for Louisiana, and we don't want to see acts 10 of terrorism anywhere in our country and it's 11 incredibly difficult days for a governor, so 12 thanks for your leadership on that as well. I 13 also have to tell you, Kristi, I've whined to my 14 wife occasionally about the temperature that's 15 coming on Monday. I'm very excited about Trump's 16 inaugural, but we're all going to be sitting 17 outside in about 12 degrees. And I thought just 18 for fun, I would check South Dakota on Monday, 19 it's one, for a high, for a high. 20 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah, for a high. 21 SENATOR LANKFORD: And so, I'm going to 22 stop whining about the temperature Monday here in 23 Washington, D.C. on it. Look, I'm going to run 24 through a couple of things here because I know 25 you, not everybody in Oklahoma knows you. The</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 114</p>	<p>1 One app? 2 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator. We will 3 eliminate the CBP One app, maintain some of the 4 data that's in it that's critical to knowing 5 who's in our country, but that app will no longer 6 be in use. 7 SENATOR LANKFORD: Thank you. No other 8 President has ever used the parole authority, 9 just in general, humanitarian parole to 10 facilitate faster processing of aliens into our 11 country, which leads to the catch and release 12 we've all heard about. So, the Oklahomans that I 13 talked to say, "Are we about to end the abuse of 14 parole and end catch and release? Is that about 15 to stop?" 16 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, President 17 Trump's been very clear that he will end catch 18 and release. 19 SENATOR LANKFORD: Terrific. Folks 20 want to know, will you use your authority with 21 the funds that are given to you by Congress to 22 actually build more wall rather than use the 23 funding that's given to you as the Biden 24 administration did to do environmental 25 remediation around the border rather than actual</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 116</p>
<p>1 questions that I get from people though in 2 Oklahoma, I want to be able to run past you 3 because they want to be able to know the answer 4 to these things, so I'm just going to blitz 5 through a whole bunch of them. Will you use the 6 legal authority that DHS already has to be able 7 to close our border? 8 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator. I will 9 work with President Trump to ensure that we're 10 securing our border. 11 SENATOR LANKFORD: Thank you. There's 12 a lot of things that this Congress needs to do, 13 has already been mentioned by Senator Slotkin as 14 well, that we need you to be able to close 15 loopholes to be able to give you additional 16 authority, but there's a tremendous amount of 17 authority currently not being used in Oklahoma, 18 as you're saying, is that about to be used? And 19 they'll be grateful to be able to hear that. No 20 other President has ever created a phone app to 21 be able to facilitate a faster processing of 22 aliens in, called the CBP One app. It's been 23 mentioned several times here. Will you use your 24 authority to stop facilitating faster processing 25 of illegal aliens into our country with the CBP</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 115</p>	<p>1 border wall and border structure? 2 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah. Senator, 3 President Trump has been clear that he wants to 4 build the wall. 5 SENATOR LANKFORD: So, do we. So, will 6 you use your authority to be able to scan more 7 vehicles and obviously we've got to get you the 8 funding to be able to do this, to be able to scan 9 more vehicles and individuals that are carrying 10 Fentanyl into our country through our ports of 11 entry. 12 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator. We will 13 continue to use technologies but hopefully be 14 able to use more with the resources that were 15 granted to scan those vehicles and know what's 16 coming in and out of this country. 17 SENATOR LANKFORD: Last year, FEMA 18 employees during disaster relief were instructed 19 by one of their supervisors that if they see a 20 Trump sign or a Trump flag flying to skip that 21 house, to not stop by there and tell them what 22 their federal government can do for them. Will 23 you allow FEMA employees or any within DHS to 24 politicize their role and to pick and choose who 25 gets help and who doesn't as an American?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 117</p>

<p>1 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, under 2 President Trump's administration, disaster and 3 emergency relief will not be handed out with 4 political bias. Every American will be responded 5 to and treated equally.</p> <p>6 SENATOR LANKFORD: That's what folks 7 want to know. Will you review the Secret Service 8 responsibilities to be able to go back through it 9 and to say, are they focused on their primary 10 mission or is there something you could distract? 11 Secret Service still chases down financial 12 crimes, they're still chasing down child 13 exploitation. Those are serious things for 14 Treasury or for FBI to do, but there's a question 15 is if that's the first priority for Secret 16 Service?</p> <p>17 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, the Secret 18 Service is in need of dramatic reforms. They do 19 have a protective detail element that is their 20 priority and also an investigation side. My 21 understanding is that that investigation side is 22 often used to train the protective detailed 23 officers, but clearly, they are not focusing on 24 what their true duty is, and it needs to get back 25 onto what they were created for and that was the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 118</p>	<p>1 that. Let me tell you another challenge we've 2 had with Homeland Security in the past four 3 years. When we ask for data and for information, 4 we get, "I'll get back to you on that." When we 5 ask again and again and again and again, we get 6 the same statement, "I'll get back to you on 7 that." Now, I can go down the street to the 8 command center, where they actually get the data 9 in live, and they have it up on big screens and 10 they're tracking exactly what's happening on the 11 southern border to the minute, but if I ask for 12 what happened last month, they'll say, "We're 13 still gathering that data." We're not asking for 14 anything other than what Congress is supposed to 15 get. That's the ability to be able to see data 16 and to have real oversight over DHS and that has 17 been a failure of this DHS along with multiple 18 other issues on that. When we request the data 19 for basic things like, how many special interest 20 aliens were allowed across the border.</p> <p>21 If it was last year, we had to find out 22 on our own. It was 70,000 people that were 23 targeted by this administration as a potential 24 national security risk that were not just found 25 at the border that were released when they were</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 120</p>
<p>1 protective detail, mission, and emergency 2 situations that they need to help plan and 3 prepare for and defend.</p> <p>4 SENATOR LANKFORD: Thank you. This 5 committee made a request to the Secretary of 6 Homeland Security last year, and by the way, also 7 the head of the FBI to be able to come before 8 this committee and to do what every Secretary of 9 Homeland Security has done for the last 20 years, 10 every single year, unbroken until last year. And 11 then the secretary refused to come before this 12 committee in an open session and talk about 13 national threats. Now, the former Chairman 14 protested strongly to the Biden administration 15 and DHS, they weren't coming, but they still 16 refused to be able to come. Will you come before 17 this committee and talk about the threats openly 18 so the American people can hear them in a public 19 forum?</p> <p>20 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes. Senator, Senator 21 Peters, and I discussed this quite a bit in our 22 meeting as well, and I have committed to come and 23 give that briefing to this committee and to the 24 American people.</p> <p>25 SENATOR LANKFORD: Thank you. We need</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 119</p>	<p>1 found at the border. 70,000 people just from 2 last year in the country right now that this 3 administration declared at the border, they're a 4 potential national security risk. Now, I know 5 you're not going to do that, but when we ask for 6 the data and for the information, when we say, 7 "How's the National Vetting Center working?" Do 8 you have the connection to be able to screen 9 individuals there? We're just doing our 10 oversight responsibility. You've served in 11 Congress before and did a great job on that and 12 did oversight. We want to still be able to do 13 the same thing. Will you provide data to this 14 committee so that we can cooperate with you to 15 help?</p> <p>16 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, I will follow 17 the law and be transparent with you and allow you 18 to do the due diligence towards oversight that 19 you're tasked with.</p> <p>20 SENATOR LANKFORD: I have absolutely no 21 doubt about that, Governor. I have absolutely no 22 doubt, looking forward to you serving in that 23 role.</p> <p>24 GOVERNOR NOEM: Thank you.</p> <p>25 SENATOR LANKFORD: Thank you.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 121</p>

<p>1 GOVERNOR NOEM: Thank you.</p> <p>2 SENATOR PAUL: Well, congratulations,</p> <p>3 Governor Noem. You are almost done.</p> <p>4 GOVERNOR NOEM: Okay.</p> <p>5 SENATOR PAUL: We've been through a lot</p> <p>6 of questions. I think you've handled the</p> <p>7 questions very well and I'm ask a couple of</p> <p>8 questions, and I think the ranking member has a</p> <p>9 few and I think we'll be done very shortly. I</p> <p>10 think a lot of Americans, including some</p> <p>11 conservatives misunderstand the First Amendment.</p> <p>12 They think the First Amendment says that</p> <p>13 "Facebook has to publish my opinion," or, "The</p> <p>14 Wall Street Journal has to publish my opinion,"</p> <p>15 or "We need to force them to be fair." That's</p> <p>16 not what the First Amendment's about at all.</p> <p>17 The First Amendment really doesn't</p> <p>18 apply to telling private companies what we can or</p> <p>19 cannot say. YouTube censored me and I despise</p> <p>20 their policy. They actually took down speeches I</p> <p>21 made on the floor, but really, I don't have a</p> <p>22 legal recourse other than I can complain about</p> <p>23 YouTube being unfair and not hosting both sides</p> <p>24 of an issue. However, with the government</p> <p>25 though, there is a rule. The First Amendment</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 122</p>	<p>1 who said that the pushiness, the coerciveness of</p> <p>2 government meeting with them was unprecedented</p> <p>3 and that they pushed back. But he also said</p> <p>4 worse than them just sort of telling him he</p> <p>5 should restrict speech; they also threatened him.</p> <p>6 They threatened to come after him through</p> <p>7 antitrust law, they threatened to remove parts of</p> <p>8 Section 230 of the liability protection.</p> <p>9 Just to imagine this bully nature of</p> <p>10 government, and I know you're opposed to that,</p> <p>11 but if you're confirmed and you're in a position</p> <p>12 of saying, "We're just no longer sending people</p> <p>13 to meet with media," and the way I describe it is</p> <p>14 to talk about constitutionally protected speech.</p> <p>15 Because some will say, "Oh, well, what about</p> <p>16 pornography or what about child trafficking?"</p> <p>17 Those are illegal. Those are not</p> <p>18 constitutionally protected speech. You have</p> <p>19 every ability to meet with that. But for</p> <p>20 constitutionally protected speech, will you tell</p> <p>21 us in America that you will no longer be sending</p> <p>22 government agents to meet with the media?</p> <p>23 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator. I'll</p> <p>24 work with you to ensure that civil rights and</p> <p>25 liberties are protected and that we are not in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 124</p>
<p>1 specifically says, "Congress shall pass no law</p> <p>2 banning or abridging speech," and this is what</p> <p>3 really got us worried about what, not only the</p> <p>4 FBI was doing, but the Department of Homeland</p> <p>5 Security actually meeting with these companies.</p> <p>6 SENATOR PAUL: ... on a weekly basis.</p> <p>7 And imagine the chilling effect of this, imagine</p> <p>8 that there are cameras here, that they're going</p> <p>9 to end their filming of this interview and then</p> <p>10 decide, "Well, what she said or what he said</p> <p>11 really was misinformation, and we should edit</p> <p>12 that out." Can you imagine? It's just hard for</p> <p>13 me to imagine that the media has not, which once</p> <p>14 defended the First Amendment, hasn't been in more</p> <p>15 of an uproar over the government meeting with the</p> <p>16 media to decide things. Some of this we didn't</p> <p>17 know, and then Elon Musk bought Twitter. People</p> <p>18 asked him, they said, "Well, you've paid \$44</p> <p>19 billion for Twitter. Isn't that too much?" And</p> <p>20 he said, "I paid \$44 billion to defend free</p> <p>21 speech."</p> <p>22 And it's been an amazing service, not</p> <p>23 only to open up the forum to more viewpoints, but</p> <p>24 to point out what the government was doing. In</p> <p>25 this last week, we heard from Mark Zuckerberg,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 123</p>	<p>1 the misinformation and disinformation space like</p> <p>2 the current DHS is.</p> <p>3 SENATOR PAUL: The only other thing I</p> <p>4 would ask on this basis is we will send requests,</p> <p>5 we sent requests previously, sometimes, and often</p> <p>6 bipartisan requests, for information. The</p> <p>7 Twitter files, Michael Schellenberger, Matt</p> <p>8 Taibbi, Bari Weiss did a great job of showing</p> <p>9 what was happening in Twitter and how they were</p> <p>10 cooperating with government. I think the other</p> <p>11 investigation that needs to occur is who are the</p> <p>12 people in government they were talking to? Do</p> <p>13 they still work at DHS, and can we make sure that</p> <p>14 they're not in a position of authority?</p> <p>15 And this is not something I'm going to</p> <p>16 tell you to do. It's just a request that you</p> <p>17 have your own investigation, that you have people</p> <p>18 who work for DHS to say, "We are going to look</p> <p>19 for people who are bringing their political bias</p> <p>20 to work and trying to influence speech and</p> <p>21 restrict speech based on their bias and help us</p> <p>22 in rooting that out and making sure that these</p> <p>23 people never again have that responsibility."</p> <p>24 Because I don't think there's ever been anything</p> <p>25 like this as far as the restriction of speech,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 125</p>

<p>1 and I think the election is largely going to stop 2 and tilt things the other way. But will you help 3 us by looking internally for those who are trying 4 to restrict speech?</p> <p>5 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, I look forward 6 to working with you on that mission.</p> <p>7 SENATOR PAUL: I don't have any other 8 questions now, but I think Senator Peters and 9 Senator Blumenthal, and we'll see how it goes. 10 We're going to start with Senator Peters with one 11 more five-minute round.</p> <p>12 SENATOR PETERS: Yeah, I'll be fairly 13 brief. We've had opportunity to talk at length 14 about many issues, and again, I appreciate that, 15 Governor. I just want to stress going forward, 16 and we've heard a lot of comments here, I think 17 there's been a fair amount of political theater. 18 Not as much as I know exist in other committees, 19 and I've always strived, and I know ranking 20 member or now Chairman Paul share the notion that 21 we want to be a fact-based committee and try to 22 find tangible solutions to the tough problems 23 that we face, and data is important. We've heard 24 a lot of numbers being thrown around here, and I 25 don't have time to go through and challenge those</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 126</p>	<p>1 that spirit, I hope if confirmed that is exactly 2 what you will be bringing to this office, and 3 let's move away from this toxic political 4 environment that we have in the country and 5 celebrate what's great about our country in the 6 spirit of bringing the American people together.</p> <p>7 So, I have one question before we turn 8 it over to other members. As a member of this 9 committee, as well as the Armed Services 10 Committee, I've focused a great deal on the safe 11 integration of drones in our airspace while 12 addressing the growing threats that drones 13 possess. We certainly see what drones are doing 14 in changing the face of warfare, whether it's in 15 Ukraine and other battlefields around the world. 16 We are very concerned about the weaponization of 17 those drones and what it could mean to the 18 security here in the United States. I've 19 proposed comprehensive legislation to extend 20 authorities beyond just the FBI and DOJ and 21 Homeland Security to local law enforcement.</p> <p>22 You mentioned in your comments about 23 security for the Super Bowl, which is incredibly 24 important, but we have to remember that that 25 threat exists for all games. In fact, one of the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 128</p>
<p>1 numbers. Some of them we don't even know where 2 they came from. I don't think that's helpful to 3 the very important mission of confirm that you're 4 going to be dealing with. So, I hope in the 5 future, that we're actually dealing with facts.</p> <p>6 You've mentioned many times that you do 7 want to deal with facts and real data. And 8 again, we heard a lot here that's not real data, 9 and we should not operate that way. And if 10 confirmed when we move forward, I'm going to look 11 forward to working with you based on the facts 12 and understand where the real threats are, how we 13 need to appropriate resources to make sure we're 14 meeting those threats.</p> <p>15 And let's take this hyper-partisanship 16 out of such an important issue of homeland 17 security. We have way too much partisanship in 18 this country, and it's resulted in a polarization 19 of people here. We've got to come together as 20 this country, we've got to lock arms and 21 understand that we're all proud Americans, we all 22 want to do what's best for the American people 23 and solve the issues that are before us.</p> <p>24 So, in that spirit, and certainly 25 you've communicated that spirit to me, but in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 127</p>	<p>1 biggest supporters of my legislation is the NFL. 2 In fact, we just had a recent playoff game that 3 was delayed because of drones that flew into that 4 playoff game. We are very concerned that you 5 could have a drone with a grenade or an explosive 6 device, which would be absolutely catastrophic. 7 It's absolutely essential that we address this 8 threat. What we're seeing around the world and 9 what we're seeing in daily activities should be a 10 concern. I think this is just a matter of time. 11 It's not if, it's when, and we need to be on the 12 front end of that.</p> <p>13 And with that in mind, I want to remind 14 folks that Congress just recently extended 15 critical counter-UAS authority, counter-drone 16 authority only for a short-time basis for the 17 12th time. We only do these little, tiny short- 18 term extensions, and we aren't dealing with the 19 problem comprehensively as we should, and those 20 are going to expire on March 14th, a very short 21 time from now. And so, my question for you, 22 Governor, is if confirmed as DHS Secretary, will 23 you commit to working with me and my colleagues 24 to pass durable, long-term authorities that will 25 protect this country from what is a real threat,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 129</p>

<p>1 and it's just a matter of time? And I don't want 2 to have a horrible incident occur, and people 3 wonder why we didn't take action beforehand. So, 4 please address that.</p> <p>5 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, I look forward 6 to working with you and this committee to address 7 the threats we may face and the usage of drones 8 in this country in relation to our national 9 security interests and our homeland security 10 interests. So, thank you for bringing up the 11 conversation today, because it is one of the 12 areas within DHS that we have a responsibility to 13 address in cooperation with Congress.</p> <p>14 SENATOR PETERS: And my first comments 15 on bringing people together, please comment on 16 that.</p> <p>17 GOVERNOR NOEM: Oh, well, thank you, 18 sir. Yes, no.</p> <p>19 SENATOR PETERS: I didn't ask that 20 question, but in my 24 seconds left.</p> <p>21 GOVERNOR NOEM: I'm looking forward to 22 working with everyone, Republicans and Democrats 23 and everyone else in between, that in this 24 country that is focused on keeping America safe 25 and secure for our future. I would just point,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 130</p>	<p>1 GOVERNOR NOEM: Sure.</p> <p>2 SENATOR PETERS: So, it's data and 3 facts that we can all agree on that drive our 4 policy and not political theater. Would you 5 agree?</p> <p>6 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, certainly, sir. 7 We need to be addressing facts and information 8 rather than political theater. We also need to 9 speak truth to facts. So, I think it's important 10 that we're willing to confront our challenges 11 head on and have those conversations. And you'll 12 see me back at your office door very soon to 13 continue our work together.</p> <p>14 SENATOR PETERS: Very good. Thank you.</p> <p>15 SENATOR PAUL: And I want to second 16 basically what Senator Peters has said. On 17 records requests, I've told him, and I plan on 18 it, it's going to be administration of my party, 19 that if he wants records and there are legitimate 20 records, we're going to sign requests together, 21 and we'd like to get the records. It also helps, 22 though, and I think Senator Lankford mentioned 23 this, is you ask a question, not you, but to the 24 administration or any administration, they're 25 like, "Oh, yeah. We'll get back to you on it."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 132</p>
<p>1 Senator, to my background and my history. When I 2 came to Congress, I worked with Republicans and 3 Democrats on both sides of the aisle on many 4 pieces of legislation and was very happy to do so 5 and focus on priorities on where we could 6 agreement, knowing we may disagree on some 7 issues, but there was areas where we could keep 8 the federal government accountable and do due 9 diligence by the people that pay their taxes and 10 get up and go to work every single day. As 11 governor, as well. I was governor for every 12 single person in the state of South Dakota, and 13 they were my number one priority, and everyone 14 knew there that it didn't matter if you were 15 Republican or Democrat, that my focus was on them 16 and keeping our state thriving and free.</p> <p>17 So, I look forward to continuing the 18 work that I always have to be coming up with 19 solutions and in a bipartisan manner, and 20 hopefully, my visits to your office and 21 conversations reflected that and my intention on 22 how I would conduct the role as the Department of 23 Homeland Security Secretary.</p> <p>24 SENATOR PETERS: Got a brief follow up 25 to that.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 131</p>	<p>1 Many times, I've even asked in advance, and I 2 would suggest that we ask you in advance 3 together, we ask in advance, "If you're coming in 4 a month, we say we want this data. Be prepared 5 to talk about it." And if you are, you'll have 6 many more friends on both sides because what 7 usually happens, and that's why I don't like 8 springing the question. If it's a technical 9 question that needs data, we're going to tell you 10 in advance, at least I will, and we want you to 11 come prepared with that.</p> <p>12 And that goes a long way, because 13 really what happens is we get stiff-armed. They 14 say, "We'll get back to you," and we have no way 15 to force you, really, other than we could cut the 16 money off, and nobody ever does that. But you'll 17 have 200,000 people working for you. By 18 goodness, send your experts out, scour the 19 records. And it is true, facts are difficult, 20 and sometimes, there's different spins on the 21 same set of facts, but I think that will help.</p> <p>22 On the drones, I think we need more 23 facts. So, I'm more than willing to work with 24 the ranking member on doing something on drones, 25 but I don't want every sheriff out there shooting</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 133</p>

<p>1 up in the sky at stuff. We got to figure out and 2 we got to get the truth about do we really have 3 drones everywhere flying all the time? How many 4 of them are planes? How many of them are drones? 5 And let's go through this, and then let's figure 6 out, and then let's talk about how we bring 7 drones down. If we interrupt and collect a lot 8 of cellular signal through that, are we doing it 9 with a warrant? What are we going to do with all 10 the Americans' data that we've collected to take 11 down drones? If we have to take a whole cell 12 towers worth of data, there's a lot of innocent 13 people's data is going to be collected in that. 14 Is that being gotten rid of? So, I think there 15 are ways we can get to the right place. 16 Everybody, obviously nobody wants drones coming 17 down. 18 The only other thing I'd add on drones 19 before I turn it over to Senator Lankford is 20 look, I'm all for the NFL being protected and the 21 Super Bowl being protected. They need to pay. 22 They are a very rich organization. They want 23 drones flying over in New Orleans. I'm all for 24 it. The NFL ought to pay the government if the 25 government's doing it, or we ought to have</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 134</p>	<p>1 have felt like they've been sidelined, and 2 they've not been able to do their job that they 3 really signed up for. And what I'm hearing from 4 you is you're going to allow them to do their job 5 again, what has been historically true for a long 6 time, that federal law enforcement is there to 7 actually help protect the country and the 8 citizens and those communities, that you're going 9 to allow them to do that, and that's helpful. 10 So, I have two quick things that I want 11 to be able to mention on this. One is right now, 12 just in the structure of this, and we can talk 13 about this a different time, but CBP facilities 14 that are along the border are really run by a 15 different entity called GSA, and they're not 16 allowed to be able to do updates on their 17 facilities or to design their facilities. 18 Somebody who lives 3,000 miles away and who 19 doesn't actually do border patrol work, they 20 actually design and oversee their facilities. 21 That's a problem that we've got to be able to 22 fix. 23 So, we've worked to be able to give 24 more flexibility to CBP that when they have 25 difficulty and challenges there, they have the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 136</p>
<p>1 private contractors doing it, but they shouldn't 2 just get it for free. Senator Lankford. 3 SENATOR LANKFORD: Thank you. Thanks, 4 again. As Senator Paul will remember on this, 5 there used to be a public facing website that all 6 Americans could actually get the data, what's 7 happening on the border, what's actually moving, 8 and then when the numbers got bad, that seemed to 9 disappear, and then we couldn't even get the data 10 anymore. So, I look forward to actually finding 11 ways to be able to have everybody has the ability 12 to be able to see some of this data as well on 13 it. 14 There's a reason that the DHS Secretary 15 is the very first week of nominations. This is a 16 really important role, and it is a non-partisan 17 role. It is a national security role, and we're 18 grateful that you've stepped into this, but it is 19 important that we actually get you on the task to 20 be able to make sure that it's out there. 21 You mentioned earlier in your testimony 22 that we do have a morale problem at DHS right 23 now, and I think a lot of that is because people 24 that signed up to be federal law enforcement to 25 be able to protect the United States of America</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 135</p>	<p>1 ability to be able to make those changes. But 2 I'm not going to ask you to make a commitment to 3 this, because this is just one of those detail 4 areas, but will you commit in the future to 5 working with us, that this committee and you can 6 work together to be able to figure out how the 7 folks that are on the field can actually make 8 decisions about the facilities they work in? 9 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah. Senator, I 10 commit to working with you on that issue. 11 SENATOR LANKFORD: Terrific. And then 12 I had a constituent in Oklahoma that is a hunter, 13 like you are, like I am. He had a bag that he 14 had some additional rounds that were in his bag 15 that were left over from a hunting trip months 16 before. He packed his bag, went on a vacation 17 trip overseas, went through security with his 18 bag. When he got overseas and then left and came 19 back, they scanned his bag and said, "You have 20 bullets, you have rounds in your bag," and he had 21 I think five that were in his bag, that he didn't 22 even remember were left over in an outside pocket 23 from a hunting trip before. 24 Well, they promptly put him in jail and 25 held him there and detained him there. Now, we</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 137</p>

<p>1 worked through all the process to be able to get 2 him back. My question is that same bag went 3 through TSA security in my state before it went 4 through security overseas. And so, one of the 5 questions that I've asked is why were those 6 rounds picked up there and not here? 7 Now, we don't have the full answer to 8 that yet, but that's just one of those TSA 9 questions that we need to have. Americans right 10 now are on planes all over the country, and they 11 count on a certain level of security when they go 12 through that process. So, in the days ahead, 13 will you work with me to be able to identify what 14 are the challenges that we still face with the 15 screening process and to be able to correct those 16 for the security of all Americans? 17 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator, I will 18 work with you on that. 19 SENATOR LANKFORD: Thank you. 20 GOVERNOR NOEM: I was surprised TSA 21 didn't come up more today, but that is an area in 22 need of reform as well, and I look forward to 23 working with you there. 24 SENATOR LANKFORD: Look forward to 25 that. Thank you. I yield back.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 138</p>	<p>1 border security, generally. We know we need to 2 provide some kind of path to earn citizenship for 3 a lot of the undocumented people in this country, 4 and we know it's possible, because we did it in 5 2013. 6 The United States Senate, as you will 7 recall, passed a comprehensive immigration reform 8 measure. Overwhelmingly, it was bipartisan. I 9 was proud to be a part of it, going through the 10 Judiciary Committee, but obviously it will 11 involve Homeland Security, and I hope that we can 12 continue, as Senator Lankford was a part of the 13 effort in the last session to expand on those 14 efforts and move forward on a bipartisan basis 15 toward bipartisan comprehensive immigration 16 reform. 17 I want to talk to you a little bit 18 about domestic terrorism, which we discussed 19 during my previous round, and I know you've 20 discussed it afterward, including not just 21 migrant crime and radicalization by ISIS, which 22 are real and present problems, I also want to ask 23 you about domestic terrorism events unrelated to 24 groups outside our borders. We've seen a rise in 25 antisemitism in this country. It has spiked</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 140</p>
<p>1 SENATOR PAUL: Government needs a 2 healthy dose of common sense. Bullets in your 3 bag. I had a guy with bullets in the back of his 4 pickup truck coming back from Mexico. We 5 arrested him and took his truck, and only because 6 the Institute of Justice fought for him for three 7 years that he get his truck back. That's crazy, 8 the things we do. Let's have some common sense, 9 and hopefully, someone overseeing it will allow 10 that. Senator Blumenthal, you're going to finish 11 us up. 12 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Thank you, 13 Chairman Paul. I'm the last of your questioners, 14 so that means I get unlimited amounts of time. 15 GOVERNOR NOEM: Okay. 16 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Not really. Not 17 even close. I want to sort of continue the 18 emphasis on bipartisanship and most especially on 19 immigration reform. What this nation needs is 20 comprehensive immigration reform. We know about 21 the need for more H-1B visas and other kinds of 22 extensions of the visa program that enable the 23 United States to have more workers that are 24 desperately needed in certain areas of our 25 country. We know that there has to be better</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 139</p>	<p>1 beyond any prediction, and I want to know of your 2 concern with antisemitist, racist events, 3 Charlottesville, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, there's a 4 shorthand for these violent terrorist acts 5 against people in the United States. 6 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, Senator, I'm very 7 concerned about what we've seen in this country 8 as far as antisemitic violence that has happened. 9 In fact, last year during our legislative 10 session, I brought legislation to more clearly 11 define it so that we could fight it in our home 12 state. And I'm hopeful I can work with you to 13 continue to do what we can to make sure that we 14 are addressing this rising threat and not 15 facilitating it in this country. 16 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: And I just want to 17 make sure that when you say we're protecting 18 Americans against terrorism, that we're 19 protecting all Americans, including people in 20 mosques, in churches, in synagogues, people 21 regardless of their worship, their race, their 22 background. We need to protect all Americans 23 from antisemitism, racism, Islamophobia. I hope 24 you'll commit to that effort. 25 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yes, correct. Thank</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 141</p>

<p>1 you, Senator, and I look forward to working with 2 you to do that.</p> <p>3 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: In my closing 4 minute-and-a-half, I just want to call your 5 attention to an effort that I've led to help 6 reunite children with their parents, children who 7 were separated as a result of the so-called 8 family separation policy. In the last 9 administration, I have introduced a measure 10 called Keep Families Together, not only to limit 11 separation of families at or near ports of entry, 12 but also the Families Belong Together Act for 13 several Congresses to help bring the children, 14 the kids who were victims of this policy and who 15 still are not back with their parents. I hope 16 that you will support that kind of effort.</p> <p>17 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, the Trump 18 administration never had a family separation 19 policy. They had a zero-tolerance policy, which 20 said that our laws would be followed. What I'm 21 alarmed by is the over 300,000 children that went 22 missing during the Biden administration. And 23 when we talk about children and what they're 24 potentially facing as far as victimization in 25 this country and the trafficking that's going on,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 142</p>	<p>1 to keep families together. We will uphold our 2 law, and we'll make sure that we're doing 3 everything we can to keep our children safe from 4 the trafficking and the drug epidemic that's hit 5 this country.</p> <p>6 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: I'm going to end 7 on an optimistic note and say I take that as a 8 yes.</p> <p>9 GOVERNOR NOEM: Yeah.</p> <p>10 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Thank you, Mr. 11 Chairman.</p> <p>12 SENATOR PAUL: Thank you for your 13 testimony. The nominee has filed responses to 14 biographical and financial questionnaires, 15 answered prehearing questions submitted by the 16 committee, and had their financial statements 17 reviewed by the Office of Government Ethics. 18 Without objection, this information will be part 19 of the hearing record with the exception of the 20 financial data, which are on file and available 21 for public inspection in the committee offices. 22 The hearing will remain open until 5:00 p.m. 23 today, Friday, January 17th for the submission of 24 statements and questions.</p> <p>25 For the record, this hearing is</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 144</p>
<p>1 this administration's lack of desire to find out 2 where those children are or what they may be 3 going through is alarming to me. So, I want to 4 stop that.</p> <p>5 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Well, because my 6 time is expiring, I'm just going to interrupt 7 again with apologies to say let's put aside ...</p> <p>8 GOVERNOR NOEM: Well, I can't put aside 9 340,000 children.</p> <p>10 SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Let's put aside 11 the labels, let's put aside what happened in the 12 past. There are still a thousand children who 13 are separated and waiting to be reunited. I'd 14 like your commitment that you're going to 15 continue the effort to reunite them with their 16 parents.</p> <p>17 GOVERNOR NOEM: Senator, keeping 18 families together is critically important to me 19 and to this country. I'm concerned about Laken 20 Riley's family, that they no longer have her. 21 I'm concerned about the fact that we have people 22 in this country that don't know where their 23 children are or people in other countries who 24 sent their children here and they've been lost by 25 this administration. So, yes, my focus will be</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 143</p>	<p>1 adjourned.</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p> <p>5</p> <p>6</p> <p>7</p> <p>8</p> <p>9</p> <p>10</p> <p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 145</p>

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Jan. 29, 2025 Fox & Friends Interview
Interview with Homeland Security Secretary Kristi
Noem

<p>1 MAN 1: Newly Admitted Homeland 2 Security Secretary Kristi Noem is hitting the 3 ground running, enforcing President Trump's 4 immigration agenda. 5 AINSLEY: Joining federal agencies here 6 in New York City, Noem says, "Among those 7 arrested, was the ringleader of that vicious 8 Venezuelan gang, Tren de Aragua." 9 MAN 1: And now, she has a big 10 announcement. On additional measures, DHS is 11 ready to take in. This is a Fox & Friends 12 exclusive. 13 MAN 2: That's right. So, Secretary 14 Kristi Noem joins us right now. Madam Secretary, 15 good morning and congratulations. 16 LAWRENCE: Welcome. 17 KRISTI NOEM: Good morning. Thank you. 18 It's wonderful to be with all of you. 19 MAN 2: Okay. The exclusive 20 announcement is, we are withdrawing the 21 Venezuelan temporary status directive. What -- I 22 remember when (indiscernible) through. What does 23 that mean? 24 KRISTI NOEM: Well, before he left 25 town, (indiscernible) signed an order that said,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 against these ICE raids. I don't get it. But 2 here's some of the comments from these Democratic 3 leaders. 4 MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON: Stand together 5 firmly in our welcoming city status. The type of 6 fear that this Administration is trying to 7 incite, we are demonstrating that we are going to 8 protect the residents of this city. 9 NEW YORK ATTORNEY GENERAL LETITIA 10 JAMES: It is performative theater, and it's 11 nothing more than shock and awe. 12 ILLINOIS GOVERNOR J.B. PRITZKER: Our 13 local law enforcement will stand up for those 14 law-abiding, undocumented people in our state. 15 MAN 3: Law-abiding. 16 AINSLEY: The message that I'm hearing 17 from them -- I know. The message I'm hearing 18 from them is, "We want to protect the rapist 19 that's here illegally. We want to protect that 20 person that was arrested over the last few days 21 that has ties to ISIS. We want to protect the 22 man who allegedly murdered his girlfriend who was 23 pregnant and a mother of two." What does your -- 24 why are they -- why do they have a problem with 25 arresting these career criminals that are here</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p>
<p>1 for 18 months, they were going to extend this 2 protection to people that are in temporary 3 protected status, which meant they were going to 4 be able to stay here and violate our laws for 5 another 18 months and we stopped that. Today we 6 signed an executive order within the Department 7 of Homeland Security in a direction that we were 8 not going to follow through on what he did to tie 9 our hands, that we are going to follow the 10 process, evaluate all of these individuals that 11 are in our country, including the Venezuelans 12 that are here and members of TDA. Listen, I was 13 in New York City yesterday and the people of this 14 country want these dirt bags out. They want 15 their communities to be safe. It was so amazing 16 to me to see people walk by us on the street, 17 early in the morning and just say, "Thank you. 18 Thank you for being here." So, this part of our 19 plan to make sure that we're protecting America, 20 keeping it safe again, just like President Trump 21 promised. 22 AINSLEY: There are some -- 23 LAWRENCE: Some -- go ahead, Ainsley. 24 AINSLEY: Thank you, Lawrence. There's 25 some Democratic leaders that are pushing back</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p>	<p>1 illegally? 2 KRISTI NOEM: They're completely out of 3 touch with the people in their cities and 4 communities. That's exactly what these Democrat 5 leaders are saying is, "We want to protect the 6 cartels. We want to protect the gangs. We want 7 to make sure that people continue to die from 8 guns, violence and drugs." And it's wrong and 9 they're going to find out very soon that their 10 communities are not with them. 11 And listen, yesterday, we picked up one 12 of the ringleaders of TDA. He had just been a 13 part of a gun -- weapons exchange and was trying 14 to buy grenades. Why would anybody in this 15 country need to buy a grenade and go out and 16 perpetuate violence? He was one of those that 17 was involved in Colorado, in Aurora, and we're so 18 thankful we got him off the streets. And what 19 I've continuously said to people is, you know, 20 what do you say to Laken Riley's family? 21 LAWRENCE: That's right. 22 KRISTI NOEM: We're going to sign that 23 bill today into law. The President will, in the 24 Oval Office, to make sure we're going after these 25 criminals. But the President is taking action</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p>

<p>1 and what was amazing is, you'll hear people and 2 Democrat leaders in different cities, like New 3 York City, some of their City Council members 4 have tried to attack what we're doing as far as 5 enforcing our laws. But the people on the 6 streets are not with them. It was amazing to 7 hear people and see them as they walked by taking 8 their kids to school, going to work, just walk by 9 us and quietly say, "Thank you. Thank you for 10 being here." And it means the world to those 11 officers that are out there risking their lives 12 to bring safety back.</p> <p>13 LAWRENCE: So, Madam Secretary, you 14 guys -- your men and women and doing a fantastic 15 job. It's a dangerous job. Those fugitive task 16 force, it's risky business. It's easy in the 17 sense, from a PR perspective, to get the 18 criminals. No-one wants, unless you're deranged, 19 want the criminals on the street, the violent 20 criminals. What I worry about is the PR when you 21 guys go to the next layer, people that have 22 overstayed their visas or work doing other jobs. 23 How do you guys overcome that? Because you've 24 been in politics for a long time. American 25 people can be fickle. They support something at</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 judges, getting those kind of resources through 2 Congress is important, to make sure we're not 3 just securing the border, we're deporting these 4 dangerous individuals, and then, fixing our 5 broken system.</p> <p>6 MAN 3: And also, legal work visas for 7 the construction industry.</p> <p>8 KRISTI NOEM: Yes.</p> <p>9 MAN 3: And other things like that 10 because there's people with great work ethics. 11 Real quick, what are you going to do with the 12 Venezuelans, the Cubans, when these countries 13 don't want to take them back? You've got 607,000 14 Venezuelans here. What do we do?</p> <p>15 KRISTI NOEM: Well, we have a fantastic 16 Secretary of State in Secretary Rubio, and he has 17 been doing incredible work. You know, the other 18 night, I was talking to him on the phone at 1 19 o'clock in the morning, and he was up and still 20 discussing negotiations with other countries and 21 working with those people in these countries to 22 do diplomatic relations. And the President 23 clearly will exercise all the authority and power 24 that he has to make these countries take them 25 back, so we --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p>
<p>1 one point and then the news media puts a crying 2 child or someone on TV and they change. So, how 3 are you all going to handle that portion?</p> <p>4 KRISTI NOEM: I think we keep talking 5 to people and talk to them about the fact that 6 this is an America where justice is applied 7 equally. You know, we can't say that American 8 citizens have to follow the law and then say that 9 people from the other countries don't have to. 10 You know, we choose laws, we put them in place, 11 Congress has the chance to change the law. But 12 until then, our job is to enforce it. And when 13 you want to live in a country where everybody's 14 treated the same and fairly and equally and has a 15 chance to live the American dream. So, we 16 understand that there are some families who have 17 been here illegally and have been perpetuating 18 that. That's a discussion that we're going to 19 have to continue to have and see if we can fix 20 our legal immigration system, as well. That's 21 one of my jobs is, you know, not only are we 22 going after those that are here illegally, but we 23 have to do due diligence and making sure we have 24 the resources to process paperwork in a timely 25 manner. And so, more immigration courts and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 MAN 3: Are you ruling out Gitmo?</p> <p>2 KRISTI NOEM: Oh, yeah. We're 3 evaluating and talking about that right now. So, 4 it's the President's decision, but it's an asset 5 and we're going to continue to look at how we can 6 use all of our assets to keep America safe.</p> <p>7 MAN 1: What a whirlwind it must have 8 bene for you over the last week or so. Krisi 9 Noem, Secretary of Homeland Security.</p> <p>10 LAWRENCE: Congratulations, by the way.</p> <p>11 MAN 1: Thank you very much.</p> <p>12 KRISTI NOEM: Thank you.</p> <p>13 MAN 3: She won over Democrats in our 14 (indiscernible)</p> <p>15 LAWRENCE: That's exactly right.</p> <p>16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p>

<p>1 CERTIFICATION</p> <p>2</p> <p>3 I, Sonya Ledanski Hyde, certify that the</p> <p>4 foregoing transcript is a true and accurate</p> <p>5 record of the proceedings.</p> <p>6</p> <p>7</p> <p>8</p> <p>9 <u>Sonya V. Ledanski Hyde</u></p> <p>10</p> <p>11 Veritext Legal Solutions</p> <p>12 330 Old Country Road</p> <p>13 Suite 300</p> <p>14 Mineola, NY 11501</p> <p>15</p> <p>16 Date: February 18, 2025</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p> <p>Page 10</p>	

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February 2, 2025 Meet the Press
Kristen Welker's Opening Sequence
Interviews with Department of Homeland
Security Secretary Kristi Noem, Missouri Senator
Eric Schmitt and Arizona Senator Mark Kelly
Panel Discussion

<p>1 KRISTEN WELKER: This Sunday: Trump's 2 tariffs. President Trump issues tariffs on 3 America's largest trading partners, threatening 4 to drive up prices for American consumers. 5 Mexico and Canada swiftly vowing to retaliate. 6 PRIME MINISTER JUSTIN TRUDEAU: Tariffs 7 against Canada will put your jobs at risk. They 8 will raise costs for you. 9 KRISTEN WELKER: Is this the start of a 10 global trade war? Plus: searching for answers. 11 JENNIFER HOMENDY: We are going to 12 conduct a thorough investigation of this entire 13 tragedy looking at the facts. 14 KRISTEN WELKER: As federal 15 investigators hunt for answers in the deadly 16 plane crash over the Potomac River, President 17 Trump shifts to blaming diversity policies, air 18 traffic controllers and his political rivals. 19 PRES. DONALD TRUMP: I put safety 20 first. Obama, Biden and the Democrats put policy 21 first. 22 SEC. SEAN DUFFY: We can only accept 23 the best and the brightest. 24 SEC. PETE HEGSETH: The era of DEI is 25 gone at the Defense Department.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 ANNOUNCER: From NBC News in 2 Washington, the longest-running show in 3 television history, this is Meet the Press with 4 Kristen Welker. 5 KRISTEN WELKER: Good Sunday morning. 6 After just two weeks in office, President Trump 7 is waging battles across the globe and inside his 8 own government. Overnight, he imposed tariffs on 9 America's three largest trading partners. They 10 are already hitting back, raising fears of a 11 trade war. The president is also facing the 12 first crisis of his second term in office: the 13 worst aviation disaster in a generation, after an 14 Army Black Hawk helicopter and American Airlines 15 plane crashed above Washington. There were no 16 survivors and 67 people died in the crash. On 17 Thursday, after a moment of silence, President 18 Trump pivoted to politics, suggesting without 19 evidence that diversity and inclusion policies 20 contributed to the crash. 21 [BEGIN TAPE] 22 PRES. DONALD TRUMP: The FAA is 23 actively recruiting workers who suffer severe 24 intellectual disabilities, psychiatric problems 25 and other mental and physical conditions under a</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p>
<p>1 KRISTEN WELKER: And cabinet battles. 2 ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR.: Senator, I 3 support vaccines. 4 SEN. MICHAEL BENNET: This is a job 5 where it is life and death. 6 SEN JAMES LANKFORD: Was Edward Snowden 7 a traitor? 8 TULSI GABBARD: My heart is with my 9 commitment to our constitution. 10 KASH PATEL: I would never do anything 11 unconstitutional or unlawful. 12 KRISTEN WELKER: President Trump's most 13 controversial nominees face off on Capitol Hill, 14 but will they all be confirmed? My guests this 15 morning: Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, 16 Republican Senator Eric Schmitt of Missouri and 17 Democratic Senator Mark Kelly of Arizona. 18 Joining me for insight and analysis are NBC News 19 Senior White House Correspondent Kelly O'Donnell, 20 NBC News Chief Capitol Hill Correspondent Ryan 21 Nobles, Marc Short, former director of 22 legislative affairs to President Trump and former 23 Democratic Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy of 24 Florida. Welcome to Sunday. It's Meet the 25 Press.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p>	<p>1 diversity and inclusion hiring initiative spelled 2 out on the agency's website. Can you imagine? 3 REPORTER: You have, today, blamed the 4 diversity element, but then told us that you 5 weren't sure that the controllers made any 6 mistake. You then said perhaps the helicopter 7 pilots were the ones who – 8 PRES. DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. 9 REPORTER: -- made the mistake – 10 PRES. DONALD TRUMP: It's all under 11 investigation. 12 REPORTER: I understand that. That's 13 why I'm trying to figure out how you can come to 14 the conclusion right now that diversity had 15 something to do with this crash. 16 PRES. DONALD TRUMP: Because I have 17 common sense, okay? And unfortunately, a lot of 18 people don't. 19 [END TAPE] 20 KRISTEN WELKER: According to the FAA 21 and other aviation groups, all candidates seeking 22 to become air traffic controllers and pilots have 23 to go through years of rigorous training and 24 testing, and meet the same exceedingly high 25 standards. As Washington was responding to the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p>

<p>1 tragedy, President Trump's three most vulnerable 2 cabinet picks were testifying on Capitol Hill. 3 Now, multiple sources tell NBC News there is 4 growing concern in the White House and among 5 Republicans that Tulsi Gabbard's nomination for 6 director of national intelligence could be in 7 serious trouble after her confirmation hearing in 8 which she didn't directly answer whether Edward 9 Snowden, who leaked government secrets, is a 10 traitor. 11 [BEGIN TAPE] 12 SEN. JAMES LANKFORD: Was he -- was he 13 a traitor at the time when he took America's 14 secret to release them in public and then ran to 15 China and became a Russian citizen? 16 TULSI GABBARD: Senator, I'm focused on 17 the future and how we can prevent something like 18 this from happening again. 19 SEN. MICHAEL BENNET: Was Edward 20 Snowden a traitor to the United States of 21 America? 22 TULSI GABBARD: Senator, I will also 23 repeat my answer. He broke the law. 24 SEN. MICHAEL BENNET: Yes or no? Is 25 Edward Snowden a traitor to the United States of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 PRES. DONALD TRUMP: No. 2 [END TAPE] 3 KRISTEN WELKER: Canadian Prime 4 Minister Justin Trudeau firing back. 5 [BEGIN TAPE] 6 PRIME MINISTER JUSTIN TRUDEAU: I want 7 to speak directly to Americans, our closest 8 friends and neighbors. This is a choice that 9 yes, will harm Canadians but beyond that, it will 10 have real consequences for you. It will raise 11 costs for you, including food at the grocery 12 store, gas at the pump. They will impede your 13 access to an affordable supply of vital goods, 14 crucial for U.S. security. 15 [END TAPE] 16 KRISTEN WELKER: All of this comes as 17 the president is ramping up his deportation 18 efforts. And joining me now from the border in 19 Del Rio, Texas is Homeland Security Secretary 20 Kristi Noem. Secretary Noem, welcome back to 21 Meet the Press. 22 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: Thank you. Thank 23 you for inviting me to be with you today, 24 Kristen. 25 KRISTEN WELKER: Thank you so much for</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p>
<p>1 America? 2 TULSI GABBARD: As someone who -- 3 SEN. MICHAEL BENNET: -- I'll go on to 4 my questions -- 5 TULSI GABBARD: -- has worn our uniform 6 in combat, I understand how critical our national 7 security is -- 8 SEN. MICHAEL BENNET: Apparently, you 9 don't. 10 [END TAPE] 11 KRISTEN WELKER: White House officials 12 insist President Trump is standing by Gabbard. 13 Meanwhile, there have been a dizzying number of 14 actions this week, as President Trump halted 15 federal funding and then reversed course amid a 16 legal challenge, fired dozens of career 17 prosecutors inside the Justice Department and 18 forced out FBI senior executives. And officially 19 on Saturday imposed tariffs on America's largest 20 trading partners: Mexico, Canada and China. 21 [BEGIN TAPE] 22 KELLY O'DONNELL: Is there anything 23 China, Canada and Mexico can do tonight to 24 forestall your implementation of tariffs 25 tomorrow?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 being here, madam secretary. We are going to 2 talk about the border, the deportation plan in 3 just a moment. I do have to start by talking 4 about the breaking news overnight, the president 5 officially announcing the new tariffs against 6 Canada, Mexico, and China, saying he wants those 7 countries to do more to crack down on illegal 8 immigration and drug trafficking. The three 9 countries are all slamming the move. They're 10 vowing retaliatory strikes. Is the United States 11 now in a trade war? 12 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: You know, these 13 countries have an opportunity to get onboard with 14 the president of the United States and to partner 15 with us to deal with illegal immigration, to take 16 back their individuals that have been in our 17 country illegally. We want to repatriate them 18 home. And they can be partners. So 19 economically, yes, they will feel -- they will 20 feel pain. They will feel what this consequences 21 are, and we'll be able to continue to go forward 22 with a president who's strong, who's putting 23 America first. 24 KRISTEN WELKER: You know, let me just 25 stress that point that I made which is the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p>

<p>1 president cites stopping the flow of fentanyl and 2 undocumented migrants for reasons for these 3 tariffs. And yet, madam secretary, Canada is not 4 a major source of fentanyl coming into the United 5 States. It's frankly minuscule compared to what 6 is seized at the southern border. Why is the 7 United States punishing Canada, one of its 8 closest allies, more than China, where fentanyl 9 originates?</p> <p>10 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: Canada has some work 11 to do as far as helping us secure our northern 12 border. So we still know we're extremely 13 vulnerable across that northern border, that we 14 have people coming into our country from China, 15 from foreign countries. We have people on the 16 terrorist watchlist that come in over our 17 northern border. And in fact what we have sent a 18 message this week on is that we're not just going 19 to enforce our southern border. We're going to 20 put extra resources, resources at that northern 21 border as well. So Canada needs to come to the 22 table. They need to work with us to make sure 23 that not only can we be good neighbors but that 24 we can help each other's economies by getting in 25 line and making sure that our immigration</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 what he is going to do and what the consequences 2 are. I encourage their leadership teams to get 3 onboard and to make sure that they're not pushing 4 up prices. If prices go up, it's because of 5 other people's reactions to America's laws. And 6 that's what President Trump is doing. He is 7 making sure that we're not picking and choosing 8 winners and losers, that the law applies equally 9 to everybody, American citizens. It applies to 10 those who are here illegally. And our world 11 leaders across the country and across the world, 12 they can help us, or they're going to face some 13 consequences.</p> <p>14 KRISTEN WELKER: Okay, so notable, you 15 are acknowledging it is possible that prices 16 could, at least initially, go up. Secretary 17 Noem, let me shift now to the southern border, 18 where you are. Let's talk about the 19 administration's mass deportation plans. There 20 are a lot of questions about the announcement 21 this week that Guantanamo Bay will be used as a 22 detention facility for migrants. Will people 23 held at Guantanamo have the same due process 24 rights and access to attorneys that they have 25 here in the United States?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p>
<p>1 policies are followed, and that those that are 2 dangerous criminals face consequences. The 3 president has been very clear from the beginning 4 that there's a new sheriff in town, that he's 5 going to make sure he's putting Americans first, 6 and that Canada can help us or they can get in 7 the way, and they will face the consequences of 8 it.</p> <p>9 KRISTEN WELKER: As you know, Madam 10 Secretary, economists all across the board are 11 warning that ultimately tariffs lead to higher 12 prices for consumers and that these tariffs in 13 particular could see prices increase on food, 14 electronics, and cars. The president himself 15 acknowledging this morning these tariffs could 16 cause, quote, "some pain." How is this move 17 helping President Trump fulfill his campaign 18 promise to lower prices?</p> <p>19 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: You know, you've 20 seen the president take action already this week 21 with Colombia. And you saw Colombia react in a 22 very positive way that was good for everyone 23 involved. Canada, Mexico, other countries have 24 the opportunity to do exactly the same. So we 25 have a strong leader. He has laid down exactly</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p>	<p>1 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: Yes, due process 2 will be followed and having facilities at 3 Guantanamo Bay will be an asset to us in the fact 4 that we'll have the capacity to continue to do 5 there what we've always done. We've always had a 6 presence of illegal immigrants there that have 7 been detained. We're just building out some 8 capacity. So we appreciate the partnership of 9 the DOD in getting that up to the level that it 10 needs to get to in order to facilitate this 11 repatriation of people back to their countries. 12 So remember that Guantanamo Bay clearly, by this 13 president, has said that it will hold the worst 14 of the worst, that we are going after those bad 15 actors. This last week, I was in New York City. 16 We were going after people that had warrants out 17 for their arrest on murders and rapes, assaults, 18 gun purchases, drug trafficking. In fact we had 19 a member of TDA that was one of the ringleaders 20 that we picked up that that week, had been trying 21 to buy grenades. These are the types of 22 individuals that we are targeting, we're removing 23 from communities, and that could end up having a 24 stay at Guantanamo Bay before they are returned 25 home to their countries to deal with.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p>

<p>1 KRISTEN WELKER: Is it possible, Madam 2 Secretary, that people could be held at 3 Guantanamo Bay indefinitely? 4 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: That is not the 5 plan. The plan is to have a process that we 6 follow that's laid out in law and make sure that 7 we're dealing with these individuals 8 appropriately according to what the state and the 9 national lawsuit -- or law directs. So we will 10 work with Congress to make sure that we're 11 addressing our legal immigration laws and using 12 Guantanamo Bay appropriately. But it is an asset 13 that we have that we fully intend to utilize. 14 KRISTEN WELKER: Could women, children, 15 and families be held there at Guantanamo? 16 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: You know, if you 17 look at what we are doing today of targeting the 18 worst of the worst, we've been very clear on 19 that. The priority of this president is to go 20 after criminal aliens that are making our streets 21 more dangerous. 22 KRISTEN WELKER: But -- 23 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: After that, we have 24 final removal orders on many individuals in this 25 country. They are the next priority, and we'll</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 KRISTEN WELKER: Yeah. 2 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: -- what happens when 3 they break the law and how they are returned to 4 their countries. I've been extremely grateful 5 for Secretary of State Marco Rubio's work with 6 these countries to negotiate and use diplomacy to 7 ensure that they are going to be taking 8 individuals back not just from their country but 9 surrounding countries so that we can immediately 10 take action to return them far from the United 11 States, which dramatically increases the 12 likelihood that they're not going to come back. 13 KRISTEN WELKER: Let me ask you, I've 14 been talking to people who are here legally and 15 they have expressed concerns. They say they are 16 carrying, in some cases, their documents around 17 with them. Some of them are afraid to go to 18 churches because ICE agents are now going into 19 churches and schools to carry out these 20 deportation operations. Do people who are here 21 legally need to be carrying around paperwork? 22 And can you guarantee that people who are here 23 legally won't be wrongfully detained? 24 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: Kristen, I would say 25 that if I've heard that expressed by people that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p>
<p>1 continue to work through -- 2 KRISTEN WELKER: But -- 3 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: -- people that are 4 breaking the law, that are in danger to these 5 communities, and use the detention centers that 6 we have set up in order to facilitate this in an 7 orderly way. 8 KRISTEN WELKER: But I guess, Madam 9 Secretary, my question, would you rule out that 10 women, that children, that families could be held 11 at Guantanamo Bay? Do you rule that out? 12 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: You know, Kristen, 13 we're going to use the facilities that we have. 14 I think you're well aware we have other detention 15 facilities other places in the country. So we 16 will utilize what we have according to what's 17 appropriate for the individuals that we have gone 18 out on these targeted operations with local law 19 enforcement and task forces to make sure that 20 they're being brought in, they're not paroled 21 anymore -- 22 KRISTEN WELKER: Yeah. 23 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: -- onto our streets, 24 that we're keeping America safe, and that we're 25 following the process for --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p>	<p>1 are legal citizens of the United States, it's 2 because the media has perpetuated that fear. The 3 media has said that that's a possibility. 4 There's nothing from this administration, from 5 President Trump or from any of the law 6 enforcement individuals in these communities, 7 that has said that they need to walk around and 8 be concerned about that at all. We -- the 9 citizens of the United States are confident that 10 finally, after four long years of having a 11 president in the White House that ignored federal 12 law and endangered their communities, that 13 there's a different man in charge now. There's a 14 man in charge who loves this country, is going to 15 help make their communities safer. And these 16 citizens that live here are thrilled. In fact, 17 when I was in New York City earlier this week and 18 -- 19 KRISTEN WELKER: Yeah. 20 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: -- in several cities 21 since then, the people walking by us on the 22 streets were thanking our officers. They were 23 thanking these investigators and those that were 24 taking these dangerous criminals out for being 25 there, for making sure that they could walk their</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p>

<p>1 kids to school with a new confidence that they 2 could get there safely and that they could do 3 business and have their community back. 4 KRISTEN WELKER: Secretary Noem, let me 5 ask you about the news that you made overnight, 6 DHS officially making the decision to end 7 Temporary Protected Status. For our audience, 8 that means, applies to about half a million 9 Venezuelans. They no longer have protection from 10 deportation. These are people who were welcomed 11 here. They did everything by the books. Why 12 should they be subject to deportation? Just very 13 quickly. 14 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: Well, the TPP 15 program has been abused, and it doesn't have 16 integrity right now. And folks from Venezuela 17 that have come into this country are members of 18 TDA. And remember, Venezuela purposely emptied 19 out their prisons, emptied out their mental 20 health facilities and sent them to the United 21 States of America. So we are ending that 22 extension of that program, adding some integrity 23 back into it. And this administration's 24 evaluating all of our programs to make sure they 25 truly are something that's to the benefit of the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 note. I want to start by talking about this 2 horrific plane crash here in the nation's 3 capital. It claimed 67 lives. I know that you 4 have been paying close attention to this 5 investigation. President Trump, for his part 6 came out, he held a news conference, started with 7 a moment of silence, quickly shifted to politics, 8 including blaming diversity programs for the 9 crash. Do you believe that President Trump runs 10 the risk of getting ahead of the facts by drawing 11 conclusions that he himself says he has no 12 evidence that diversity programs played a role? 13 SEN. ERIC SCHMITT: Well, the first 14 thing I want to say is that our thoughts and 15 prayers are with the families. This is going to 16 be a long road for them. As everyone knows, this 17 is a nightmare. You know, you take a loved one 18 to the airport, you never expect this to happen, 19 you know, the last time you ever see that person. 20 And so, I don't want -- we'll talk about all 21 that, but the human tragedy here is something 22 that's gut-wrenching for those families. My 23 prayers, my family's prayers are with them, and I 24 know the country wants to wrap their arms around 25 them too. They deserve a full investigation, and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p>
<p>1 United States, so that they're not to the benefit 2 of criminals. 3 KRISTEN WELKER: Homeland Security 4 Secretary Kristi Noem, thank you so much. I know 5 it's been a busy week. I know you've also been 6 very engaged in the investigation into -- 7 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: Yeah. 8 KRISTEN WELKER: -- the horrific crash 9 here. We appreciate your joining us. Thank you 10 so much. 11 SEC. KRISTI NOEM: Yeah. Thank you so 12 much. We're praying for their families, 13 absolutely. 14 KRISTEN WELKER: Thank you, Madam 15 Secretary. When we come back, Republican Senator 16 Eric Schmitt of Missouri joins me next. 17 (Break) 18 KRISTEN WELKER: Welcome back. And 19 joining me now is Republican Senator Eric Schmitt 20 of Missouri. Senator Schmitt, welcome back to 21 Meet the Press. 22 SEN. ERIC SCHMITT: It's great to be 23 with you, Kristen. 24 KRISTEN WELKER: Well, it is great to 25 have you back. I do have to start on a somber</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p>	<p>1 I think we've learned a few things already. But 2 as it relates specifically to the president's 3 comments, this is nothing new, Kristen. This 4 idea of emphasizing DEI across the federal 5 government has real ramifications. The president 6 said and as you just mentioned, not related 7 specifically, we don't know, the investigation 8 will find out. But broadly speaking, DEI is 9 poison. It's hurt recruiting, it's hurt hiring, 10 it's hurt retention. The hours spent on these 11 struggle sessions during training is hours you 12 don't spend on safety. And that's just a fact. 13 And it's evidenced by the fact that 1,000 people 14 sued the air traffic control for not being hired 15 because of their race. It's evidenced by the 16 fact that you have also people who were fired 17 from air traffic controls, and pilots for not 18 taking the Covid shot. And then, you know, the 19 government then, of course, makes it a priority 20 to hire 87,000 IRS agents to roam across the 21 country and harass Americans. So this has 22 become, Kristen, an obsession. And in the 23 commerce committee, if you paid any attention — 24 (INAUDIBLE) that I've had, other members have 25 had, to put these policies — (INAUDIBLE) exactly</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p>

<p>1 what they've done. And they try to score 2 political points by doing it, but it has real 3 ramifications on the workforce. 4 KRISTEN WELKER: Just very quickly, I 5 mean, we have to point out that the FAA, aviation 6 groups, say that every pilot, every air traffic 7 controller has to pass the same rigorous test. 8 They have to meet exceedingly high standards. 9 But bottom line, Senator, what I'm asking you, do 10 you have any evidence whatsoever that diversity 11 programs played a role in this crash? Because 12 the President said he doesn't. 13 SEN. ERIC SCHMITT: Well, no one has 14 said that. But I do think if you want to find a 15 solution you have to be honest about the problem. 16 And the truth is, merit has taken a backseat to 17 quotas. That's the truth -- 18 KRISTEN WELKER: But Senator, we don't 19 know that's the problem in this case-- 20 SEN. ERIC SCHMITT: No, no. 21 KRISTEN WELKER: We don't know that 22 that's the problem in this instance-- 23 SEN. ERIC SCHMITT: I know. But 24 Kristen, Kristen we can distinguish the 25 investigation in this case versus writ large.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 He's now imposing tariffs on the country's three 2 biggest trading partners: Mexico, Canada, and 3 China. Can you guarantee, Senator, that these 4 tariffs won't drive up prices? 5 SEN. ERIC SCHMITT: All we have to do 6 is look at President Trump's first four years 7 where he institutes tariffs. We didn't see 8 inflation. In fact, we saw record wage growth. 9 We saw \$200 billion plus go into the Treasury 10 from those tariffs. Tariffs that help even the 11 playing field with countries who have been 12 ripping us off, quite frankly, for generations. 13 China, specifically. I think the American people 14 are tired of being ripped off. They're tired of 15 seeing their jobs go overseas. But I think these 16 tariffs specifically, Kristen, are meant to bring 17 Canada and Mexico to the table for the fentanyl 18 that is streaming into our communities. It's 19 also worth noting, in the last four years, that 20 the trade imbalance and our trade deficit has 21 gone up 200 percent plus with Canada and up 52 22 percent with Mexico. The fact is these countries 23 are taking advantage of us. All along the while 24 we've got fentanyl streaming into our country. 25 So Mexico has a choice. They can choose to trade</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p>
<p>1 It's also true in our military. Pete Hegseth is 2 going to get rid of DEI in the military. It's 3 divisive, it's hurt recruiting. The same is true 4 across the government. People don't want to sit 5 through these struggle sessions with this race 6 essentialism. And by the way, the federal 7 government is being sued for discriminating 8 against certain employees because of their race. 9 So this is a fact of the matter. It's true. And 10 the one thing people care about is they want to 11 get from here to there safely. I don't care, and 12 Americans don't care the race of the pilot, or 13 somebody in the tower, or their religion, or 14 their gender. They just want the best people, 15 and that is what we have to get back to in the 16 country. 17 KRISTEN WELKER: Alright. Let's, as 18 you say, your thoughts and prayers are with the 19 families right now. I think that certainly is 20 something that everyone can agree with. I do 21 want to move on-- 22 SEN. ERIC SCHMITT: Absolutely-- 23 KRISTEN WELKER: --to tariffs, this 24 breaking news overnight. President Trump, as you 25 know, won in part on a vow to bring down prices.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p>	<p>1 with the United States or continue to cozy up 2 with the cartels. It's pretty simple. 3 KRISTEN WELKER: But you talk about 4 President Trump's first term. It's worth noting 5 that during his first term a number of prices did 6 go up on various goods from washing machines and 7 tires. You mention Canada. Very little fentanyl 8 is coming across the border from Canada. Why is 9 the President punishing Canada more than China, 10 the country's adversary? Do you think that's 11 right? 12 SEN. ERIC SCHMITT: Well, that number 13 is growing, though, Kristen. I think it's 14 important, especially in the last year-- 15 KRISTEN WELKER: --But it's minuscule 16 right now. It's miniscule right now. 17 SEN. ERIC SCHMITT: But it's growing. 18 It's growing. And when they have a porous 19 border, and they don't seem very concerned at 20 all-- and by the way, I heard the clip earlier, 21 Justin Trudeau sort of lecturing Americans. My 22 advice to him is, he probably ought to talk to 23 the Canadian people who are about ready to throw 24 him out of office because he's been a total 25 disaster. So, I think we've got a president that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>


<p>1 wants to put America first and protect people. 2 We have 100,000 people a year, Kristen, dying 3 from fentanyl. He ran about this -- on this. 4 This is not a surprise. He talked about getting 5 operational control of our border, he talked 6 about tariffs and improving our standing in the 7 world. He's doing all those things. And look no 8 further, the best evidence of this last week. 9 Colombia came to the table after that threat and 10 agreed to take criminals back into their country, 11 and illegal immigrants. So, the fact of the 12 matter is it works. It worked the first time 13 when he was in office. We didn't see inflation, 14 we saw wage growth, and we saw more on-shoring of 15 jobs back here to the United States. 16 KRISTEN WELKER: I have to ask you 17 about the confirmation hearings, of course. Last 18 time you were here in November you told me you 19 were a "yes" on President Trump's Cabinet 20 nominations. Some of your Republican colleagues, 21 this week expressing concern in the wake of Tulsi 22 Gabbard's confirmation hearing. She's been 23 tapped to be the Director of National 24 Intelligence. Of course she was pressed on 25 whether Edward Snowden is a traitor--would not</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 the intelligence community spying on a 2 presidential candidate that happened to be 3 President Trump, suppressing the Hunter Biden 4 laptop story when he was running again, and then, 5 of course, the lawfare that included. So, I 6 think people are tired of these games, of this 7 sort of, "gotcha" stuff. Look, if he's, if he's 8 been indicted, he comes back to the States, he's 9 going to have a trial. But this idea we tried to 10 disqualify using these terms is ridiculous. 11 KRISTEN WELKER: Well, and what I'm 12 doing really, I mean, these are questions that 13 were asked by your Republican colleagues, 14 including Senator Langford, who asked very 15 simply, is he a traitor? A government contractor 16 who leaked government secrets? It's a very 17 simple question, yes or no? We're almost out of 18 time, though. 19 ERIC SCHMITT: Sure. 20 KRISTEN WELKER: Is he a traitor? 21 ERIC SCHMITT: I think she was pretty 22 clear. I think she's pretty clear. 23 KRISTEN WELKER: But what do you think? 24 ERIC SCHMITT: That she served this 25 country honorably, and I think it's totally</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p>
<p>1 answer that directly. Senator, are you still a 2 "yes" on Tulsi Gabbard's confirmation? 3 SEN. ERIC SCHMITT: I am, 100 percent. 4 I think she's very well-qualified. No one's 5 disputing that. She served our country honorably 6 in the military. She's been a member of 7 Congress. And I think she strikes a really 8 important balance for a key position of civil 9 liberties, protecting civil liberties of United 10 States citizens, and also our national security. 11 So, I still think she's going to get confirmed. 12 That's what this confirmation process is all 13 about, for people to ask tough questions. And I 14 think she's going to do just fine next week. 15 KRISTEN WELKER: Senator, very quickly 16 to you, how would you answer that same question? 17 Is Edward Snowden a traitor? 18 ERIC SCHMITT: Look, I think it's, it's 19 so interesting that this lexicon that gets 20 manipulated now. There were certain words that 21 you needed to say during COVID. There are 22 certain words that you need to say now. The fact 23 of the matter is, the people who are most 24 concerned, the most pushing this narrative are 25 the same ones who had no issues whatsoever with</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p>	<p>1 ridiculous to try to smear people who are trying 2 to serve this country, because again, it's sort 3 of "gotcha." And I will also point out a lot of 4 people that are asking this don't like her 5 because she's going to bring reform and she's 6 going to curb the excesses in the worst instincts 7 of the intelligence community at times that has 8 gone after presidential candidates. 9 KRISTEN WELKER: Alright. Senator Eric 10 Schmitt, thank you so much for being here. 11 Really appreciate it. 12 SEN. ERIC SCHMITT: Great to be with 13 you. 14 KRISTEN WELKER: When we come back, 15 Democratic Senator Mark Kelly of Arizona joins me 16 next. 17 (Break) 18 KRISTEN WELKER: Welcome back, and 19 joining me now is Democratic Senator Mark Kelly 20 of Arizona. Senator Kelly, welcome back to Meet 21 the Press. 22 SEN. MARK KELLY: Good morning, 23 Kristen. 24 KRISTEN WELKER: It's great to have you 25 back. I do have to start again on this tragic</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 29</p>

<p>1 news about this plane crash here in the nation's 2 capital. You, of course, have flown combat 3 missions as a Navy pilot. You just heard my 4 conversation with Senator Schmitt responding to 5 what we heard from President Trump this week, 6 that diversity programs, according to the 7 president, may have played a role. The president 8 acknowledging he does not have proof of that. 9 What is your take on what we know and what you've 10 heard?</p> <p>11 SEN. MARK KELLY: Well, Kristen, first, 12 it's a tragic and sad accident. I really feel 13 for the families on the plane, on the helicopter. 14 It's -- you know, you know, these accidents are 15 all often a very complicated set of things that 16 happen sequentially. It's often not one thing 17 that causes a major aviation accident like this. 18 I've been involved in accident investigations, 19 particularly, like with the -- with Space Shuttle 20 Columbia, you know, as an example, that we lost 21 in 2003. And to say that it has to do with the 22 person's color of their skin or their gender, I 23 think that's just poor leadership. And 24 especially at a time where any president is 25 supposed to be the consoler-in-chief, and not the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 that we could do to strengthen the border. You 2 know, we've demonstrated that Democrats and 3 Republicans can work together to come up with 4 real policy solutions. What the president has 5 proposed here, raising tariffs on Canada and 6 Mexico, it's going to just do one thing. You say 7 it may raise prices. It will raise prices for 8 American consumers. We saw this in his first 9 administration here in Arizona. We wound up in a 10 trade war over certain things with China. For 11 cotton producers and pecan farmers, they wound up 12 -- it really, really hurt their businesses. But, 13 you know, beyond this it's going to hurt American 14 families. They're going to see prices go up for 15 food, for energy, for electronics, I think you 16 mentioned that, for autos. This is not the way 17 to handle this.</p> <p>18 KRISTEN WELKER: I do want to turn to 19 the nomination process. Tulsi Gabbard in the 20 spotlight this week. You were among those asking 21 her a range of different questions during her 22 confirmation hearing. She is a former Democratic 23 lawmaker. We should let -- remind folks of that. 24 She ran for president in the Democratic Party. 25 Notably, you have supported all but two of Mr.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p>
<p>1 person that's going to try to divide us as a 2 country, especially when you don't have the 3 appropriate information. And he clearly does not 4 have the information in this case. This is too 5 early in the investigation. The NTSB is really 6 good at this. They'll do a thorough 7 investigation and we'll eventually see what the 8 cause of this accident was.</p> <p>9 KRISTEN WELKER: Yeah, and they are 10 still investigating, that is for sure. Let's 11 shift to the other big news of this morning, the 12 president's announcement on tariffs on the 13 country's three biggest trading partners. You 14 heard Senator Schmitt defending the plan, you 15 heard Secretary Noem defending the plan as well, 16 saying ultimately this will be good for the 17 economy, rejecting the idea that it could drive 18 up prices. Do you think, as President Trump has 19 argued, that tariffs ultimately will be good at 20 stemming the flow of illegal immigration and 21 fentanyl?</p> <p>22 SEN. MARK KELLY: Kristen, you're -- 23 we're talking about two different things here. 24 Border security is important. I represent 25 Arizona. We're a border state. There are things</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p>	<p>1 Trump's nominees so far, but you've expressed 2 some real concerns about Tulsi Gabbard. Based on 3 your conversations, do you think Tulsi Gabbard 4 has the votes to get confirmed?</p> <p>5 SEN. MARK KELLY: Well, I think anybody 6 who went into that confirmation hearing this week 7 with questions about, you know, her background, 8 her ability to manage 18 intelligence agencies, 9 and also her commitment to guard our secrets -- 10 as the director of national intelligence, she is 11 responsible for a lot. She's got to sort through 12 a massive amount of information every single day, 13 decide what to present to the president. I think 14 if you had questions about her decision making 15 and her judgment when you went into that hearing, 16 I think anybody that sat there, like I did, or my 17 colleagues on both sides of the aisle, probably 18 left with more questions. I know I did. You 19 played Senator Lankford's exchange with her over 20 whether or not Edward Snowden was a traitor. 21 It's a pretty simple question to ask. He 22 actually thought he was throwing her a softball, 23 something she could easily, you know, admit to. 24 I mean, the definition of a traitor's pretty 25 simple. I mean, whether or not somebody betrayed</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p>

<p>1 our country, and in the case of Edward Snowden, 2 we know he did. He gave -- he released a lot of 3 classified information, top secret information, 4 over a million documents, and he gave a lot of 5 those to Russia, he may have given some to China. 6 He meets the definition. I don't see why she 7 couldn't, you know, say that. I'm kind of 8 puzzled by it and, you know, I don't know why she 9 wouldn't admit that. It's interesting, my friend 10 and colleague, Eric Schmitt, wouldn't either. I 11 don't, you know, I don't question, you know, his 12 judgment on this. I think this is a very 13 political situation. But I think my Republican 14 colleagues, many of them will still have 15 questions about her nomination. 16 KRISTEN WELKER: All right, well, we'll 17 have to see how it all plays out. It will be 18 obviously a dynamic several days as we wait to 19 see what happens with her vote, whether she gets 20 out of committee. Sources who are close to her 21 say they do feel confident she will. I do want 22 to talk about the president's mass deportation 23 plans. You heard from Homeland Security 24 Secretary Kristi Noem earlier in the broadcast. 25 ICE operations are already being carried out</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 accordance with our values. 2 KRISTEN WELKER: One more question to 3 you, Senator. President Trump obviously signed 4 the Laken Riley Act into law this week. Just so 5 folks understand, that will allow law enforcement 6 to detain and to deport undocumented immigrants 7 who've been charged with theft-related crimes. 8 You voted in support of this bill. I had an 9 opportunity to interview your colleague, Senator 10 Adam Schiff, who opposed it. He told me last 11 week this bill is so broad the U.S., quote, 12 "would be able to deport Dreamers for taking a 13 tube of toothpaste." Can you guarantee this law 14 won't be applied in a way that's overly broad? 15 SEN. MARK KELLY: Well, this law is 16 about public safety. Representing a border 17 state, this affects Arizona I think more than 18 other states just because of, you know, numbers, 19 and it's where, you know, folks cross. Kristen, 20 if you come across the border and you don't have 21 documentation, you've already committed a crime. 22 This is for somebody who then decides to commit a 23 second crime. And they're taken into custody, 24 there'll be due process involved so they could 25 eventually -- if they can prove that these are</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 36</p>
<p>1 across the country. You have pushed for tougher 2 standards, tougher border policies. Do you 3 support what you are seeing so far, the 4 deportation plan, as it's been carried out by the 5 president? 6 SEN. MARK KELLY: Yeah, I don't. For a 7 number of reasons. It seems to be more about 8 intimidation of a big population of people. It's 9 going down the road of mass deportation, which he 10 said he would do, which would rip communities 11 apart. These are really bad ideas. Sending -- 12 Trying to send folks back to Colombia, which we 13 do routinely, but sending them on military 14 airplanes, which, by the way, costs a lot more 15 money than putting them on a chartered airline 16 flight which we've, you know, done for decades. 17 It's all about scaring and intimidating people. 18 It's the same thing for Guantanamo Bay. Building 19 a facility there is because it just sounds very 20 frightening to a lot of folks. When you're a 21 criminal, we need to find where you are and we 22 need to take you into custody, and if you're not 23 documented, you should be returned. That makes 24 sense. I'm all about public safety and border 25 security. But we've got to do it in a way in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 35</p>	<p>1 not valid charges, or they go through the court 2 system -- they could then be released. I'm not 3 concerned about, you know, what Adam is talking 4 about. I think, you know, very highly of 5 Dreamers. You know, Dreamers are as American as 6 my own two kids. I think we should be working 7 towards a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers. I 8 know some of my Republican colleagues feel the 9 same way. And we're going to solve these border 10 issues by working together, Democrats and 11 Republicans, to come up with policy changes on 12 border security and immigration reform. 13 KRISTEN WELKER: All right, Senator 14 Kelly, thank you so much for joining us. We 15 really appreciate it. 16 SEN. MARK KELLY: Thank you, Kristen. 17 KRISTEN WELKER: And when we come back, 18 a warning about the need for checks and balances 19 in the federal government from a former attorney 20 general. Our Meet the Press Minute is next. 21 KRISTEN WELKER: Welcome back. One of 22 the Senate's key checks on the executive branch 23 was back on display this week as senators grilled 24 some of President Trump's more vulnerable Cabinet 25 nominees like Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. Back in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p>

<p>1 1961, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, Sr. 2 joined Meet the Press with this defense of 3 Congress's role in reining in the administration. 4 [BEGIN TAPE] 5 ROBERT F. KENNEDY, SR.: I think it's 6 terribly important to ensure that the executive 7 branch of the government is not corrupt, and that 8 they are efficient, that the legislative branch 9 of the government has this ability to check on 10 what we're doing in the executive branch of the 11 government. So, in every instance that has been 12 brought to our attention at the Department of 13 Justice so far by various departments of the 14 executive branch where this question has been 15 raised, we have suggested and recommended that 16 they make the information available to Congress. 17 We will continue to do that. I don't say that 18 there might not be an instance where executive 19 privilege might have to be used, but I think that 20 it's terribly important, with the executive 21 branch of the government as powerful and strong 22 as it is, that there be some check and balance on 23 it. 24 [END TAPE] 25 KRISTEN WELKER: And when we come back,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 after our nearest neighbors and one of our 2 biggest global adversaries and competitors in 3 China. And I pressed him looking for, "What does 4 he want back? Is it a negotiating ploy? Is 5 there a concession you're looking for?" And he 6 kept saying no. And if you read the text of it, 7 he talks about the national emergency we have 8 with Canada, using that power, that authority he 9 has to declare something that many Americans may 10 not see. I then asked him about, "You ran 11 wanting to reduce prices, and we know that prices 12 are paid -- the -- the importers pay the tariff 13 and then it's passed on." And he said, "There 14 could be disruption. But people will 15 understand." I said, "Mr. President, you said 16 you would reduce everyday costs." So, I think 17 there is a lot more to be understood about the 18 real world impact. It's coming on the fly. It 19 appeared on the fly. He sort of negotiated down 20 from 25 percent to 10 percent on energy because 21 we know energy matters to his overall policy, and 22 it matters to Americans who have to fill their 23 gas tanks. 24 KRISTEN WELKER: Well, Ryan, pick up 25 there. Because for so many constituents of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p>
<p>1 will President Trump's controversial Cabinet 2 nominees make it through the confirmation 3 process? The panel is next. 4 (Break) 5 KRISTEN WELKER: Welcome back. The 6 panel is here: NBC News Senior White House 7 Correspondent Kelly O'Donnell, NBC News Chief 8 Capitol Hill Correspondent Ryan Nobles, former 9 Democratic Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy of 10 Florida, and Marc Short, former Trump Director of 11 Legislative Affairs. Thanks to all of you for 12 being here. Boy, there are a lot of headlines to 13 get to. Kelly, let's start with the one that 14 broke overnight: tariffs. The president 15 officially moving to impose tariffs against 16 America's three biggest trading partners. You 17 had a very robust exchange with him on Friday in 18 the Oval Office about a range of issues, 19 including this one. You pressed him repeatedly: 20 will prices go up? 21 KELLY O'DONNELL: We had a lot of back 22 and forth on this. In part, I was acting as a 23 pool reporter, so I was in the Oval. And what 24 was striking is this is the president's first 25 foreign policy move, and it is one that goes</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p>	<p>1 lawmakers on Capitol Hill, this is a, you know, 2 issue that impacts them on a day-to-day basis. 3 What is the reaction that you're starting to see 4 trickle into this news that the president is 5 imposing tariffs? And, by the way, potentially 6 vowing to escalate them if these other countries 7 retaliate, which they say they're going to do. 8 RYAN NOBLES: Well, this is going to be 9 a real test to see if Republicans in Congress are 10 willing to stand up to the president, because 11 they're going to be the first ones to hear 12 directly from their constituents when their 13 constituents' prices start to rise. And what 14 we've seen, at least in the first two weeks of 15 this administration, is that Congressional 16 Republicans are largely out of the loop. They're 17 finding out about these major policy proposals 18 oftentimes when we tell them in the hallways of 19 Congress. And so, there's little opportunity for 20 them to react, to respond, and to encourage the 21 president to go into a different direction 22 because he's not consulting them on some of these 23 big decisions. There's a long laundry list of 24 things that I know you want to talk about, 25 Kristen. So, we'll have to see if they're</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p>

<p>1 reactionary here. Do they plead with the White 2 House to try and rein this in or refine the 3 policy proposal a little bit? Because there's no 4 doubt they're going to hear from their 5 constituents first. And we're only a year and 6 change away from the next election, and they're 7 the ones that are going to feel the brunt of 8 these decisions first.</p> <p>9 KRISTEN WELKER: Marc, as someone who 10 was in the first Trump administration when 11 tariffs were imposed against China, there's a 12 difference between these round of tariffs and 13 what we saw during the first Trump 14 administration.</p> <p>15 MARC SHORT: I think this is one of the 16 greatest differences between Trump 1.0 and Trump 17 2.0. In the first administration, the tariffs 18 were largely targeted, largely toward China for 19 national security purposes to get concessions. 20 The first administration had economic advisors 21 and national security advisors who believed in 22 trade for both economic benefit and national 23 security benefit. The team he has around him 24 today has a very different viewpoint. It's a 25 very mercantilist viewpoint that says, "You</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 broad set of events that we have witnessed? 2 STEPHANIE MURPHY: Well, I think that 3 the Democrats have a real opportunity here if 4 they focus on standing up for the people. And 5 while some of the things that you mentioned are 6 really outrageous -- firing people at the 7 Department of Justice and at the FBI -- Democrats 8 can't be seen as fighting for power within 9 Washington. They have to be seen fighting for 10 the people. And so highlighting the federal 11 funding freeze, talking about the impact of 12 tariffs on everyday Americans, and the cost of 13 their groceries, and all of their prices, that's 14 going to be a winning message for Democrats. 15 It's unfortunate, though, because this president 16 ran and won on lowering costs for Americans, and 17 his first sets of policies are going to actually 18 raise costs for Americans. And Democrats are 19 going to hang that around not just Donald Trump 20 but also Republicans in Congress.</p> <p>21 KRISTEN WELKER: Yeah, we are starting 22 to see them galvanize around this message that 23 you talk about, Stephanie. And what's so notable 24 about the FBI firings, Kash Patel said in his 25 hearing there will not be retribution against</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p>
<p>1 should be paying for access to American markets." 2 Regardless of the reality that Americans or the 3 importers paying that tariff or that tax, the 4 belief is that this is a tax that should be -- 5 should be assessed to other people. I think the 6 bigger question is going to be if there's this 7 huge market reaction this week, if it begins to 8 impact the economy, then I think could undermine 9 a lot of his other parts of his agenda. And I'll 10 say this is just the beginning. The president 11 and his current team really believe this is the 12 right economic policy across the board and there 13 will be a lot more tariffs coming.</p> <p>14 KRISTEN WELKER: Yeah. Stephanie, 15 let's zoom out a little bit. This week really 16 has brought a dizzying number of headlines. It 17 started with the administration basically 18 announcing cuts to all federal aid. They pulled 19 that back, so big reversal. We're kind of 20 waiting to see how that plays out. The 21 president, as we talked about on the program, 22 blaming diversity programs for the crash. And 23 then on Friday, the announcement that a number of 24 prosecutors -- career prosecutors within the FBI 25 and DOJ being fired. What do you make of this</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p>	<p>1 anyone at the FBI. And Ryan, it comes as we have 2 this new reporting that of all the president's 3 nominees, it's Tulsi Gabbard who may be in real 4 trouble. That White House officials were rattled 5 by her inability to say that "Yes, Edward Snowden 6 is a traitor." Notably, today Senator Schmitt 7 didn't want to go there, didn't want to touch it. 8 What are you hearing about her chances of getting 9 confirmed?</p> <p>10 RYAN NOBLES: So, I think of the three 11 most controversial picks -- Patel, RFK Jr., and 12 Tulsi Gabbard -- Gabbard is the one that is in 13 the most danger. But I do think that you have to 14 start from a place of them getting confirmed and 15 work your way back. Because what this 16 administration is not going to do is what they 17 did with Matt Gaetz and pull the nominee back 18 before they get a vote. They're going to force 19 every single Republican senator to be accountable 20 for this vote, and vote yes or no. And that 21 includes Tulsi Gabbard. Now, there is a 22 difference, though, in their approach in terms of 23 how they're encouraging or putting pressure on 24 these senators to vote yes or no, which a part of 25 your reporting says, Kristen. And you know, with</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p>

<p>1 Pete Hegseth, it was a very clear message to 2 Republican senators, a message sometimes sent by 3 the president himself. At this point, we're not 4 seeing that same level of pressure with Tulsi 5 Gabbard. Whether or not that leads to enough 6 senators, you know, it would require four to step 7 out and vote no, that's something we'll probably 8 find out this week.</p> <p>9 KRISTEN WELKER: Yeah. Kelly, you know 10 how this plays out, having covered the Hill.</p> <p>11 KELLY O'DONNELL: It is also a test of 12 how the president judges those on camera 13 performances. And for Robert Kennedy Jr. and 14 Tulsi Gabbard, the performances during the 15 hearings did not meet the same bar that Pete 16 Hegseth did.</p> <p>17 KRISTEN WELKER: And Marc, what do you 18 make of Tulsi Gabbard, but then this morning 19 Senator Schmitt saying, "I'm not going to touch 20 that. That's -- that's not a real question." And 21 yet it was a question that Republicans were 22 asking her.</p> <p>23 MARC SHORT: I think a lot of Americans 24 don't remember who Edward Snowden is or Julian 25 Assange. But I think that -- a lot of Trump</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 CERTIFICATION</p> <p>2</p> <p>3 I, Sonya Ledanski Hyde, certify that the 4 foregoing transcript is a true and accurate 5 record of the proceedings.</p> <p>6</p> <p>7</p> <p>8 </p> <p>9</p> <p>10</p> <p>11 Veritext Legal Solutions 12 330 Old Country Road 13 Suite 300 14 Mineola, NY 11501</p> <p>15</p> <p>16 Date: February 18, 2025</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p>
<p>1 supporters believe the Intelligence Committee 2 hurt him greatly with the fake Russia 3 investigation. But the speed of position where 4 you can say that somebody who sold American 5 secrets, that put Americans in uniforms lives in 6 danger is somehow not a traitor, is an extension 7 that goes far beyond the pale of where I think 8 our party is today when you can't say that Julian 9 Assange and Edward Snowden were actually 10 traitors.</p> <p>11 STEPHANIE MURPHY: National security is 12 dependent on the ability to collect intelligence 13 and safeguard intelligence. And on both of those 14 counts, Tulsi's hearing showed that she didn't 15 full-throatedly believe in either the key ability 16 to collect the intelligence or the need to 17 safeguard it. And I think that should put some 18 real questions in the senators' minds.</p> <p>19 KRISTEN WELKER: All right. Well, 20 we'll have to see how it all plays out. Great 21 conversation, guys. Thanks so much for being 22 here. That is all for today. Thank you so much 23 for watching. We'll be back next week, because 24 if it's Sunday, it's Meet the Press.</p> <p>25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p>	

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EXHIBIT 44

NOTES

The Racialization of Crimes Involving Moral Turpitude

ELIJAH T. STAGGERS*

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INTRODUCTION

The Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”)¹ imposes severe collateral immigration consequences on a non-citizen convicted of a “crime involving moral turpitude.”² If an individual is convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude within five years of entering the United States and receives a jail sentence of one year or more, the INA permits the deportation or removal of that individual.³

The executive branch holds enormous power over the removal of non-citizens. It serves as both the prosecutor and judge during immigration proceedings. The Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”), a creature of the executive branch, initiates and prosecutes removal proceedings against a non-citizen. Immigration judges, appointed by the executive branch, adjudicate these proceedings. Thus, the executive branch enjoys the ability to tilt the scales in its own favor at almost every step of the deportation process.

The United States Courts of Appeals are the saving grace in this system. Under the INA, the courts of appeals possess exclusive statutory jurisdiction to review final orders of removal.⁴ Accordingly, the courts of appeals can serve as a check against the executive branch and prevent injustice from occurring. This jurisdiction is particularly important because the courts of appeals have the power to prevent a recent development in immigration jurisprudence—DHS’s attempts to categorize criminal gang activities as crimes involving moral turpitude.

DHS recently argued that state statutes criminalizing street gang participation constituted crimes involving moral turpitude, and, in turn, initiated removal proceedings against non-citizens convicted for those crimes in state court.⁵ In *Hernandez-Gonzalez v. Holder*, the Ninth Circuit was the first U.S. Court of Appeals to review an immigration court’s decision that a criminal street gang participation statute constituted a crime involving moral turpitude for which a non-citizen could be deported under 8 U.S.C. § 1227(a)(2)(A)(i). The Ninth Circuit held that a conviction under California’s sentence enhancement statute⁶ for a gang-related crime did not constitute a crime involving moral turpitude.⁷ The Fourth Circuit reached a similar conclusion in *Cabrera v. Barr*, where it held that a conviction under

1. 8 U.S.C. § 1151 *et seq.* (2018).
2. See § 1227(a)(2)(A)(i)-(ii).
3. See § 1227(a)(2)(A)(i).
4. See § 1252(a)(5).
5. See *Hernandez-Gonzalez v. Holder*, 778 F.3d 793, 798 (9th Cir. 2015); *Cabrera v. Barr*, 930 F.3d 627, 629 (4th Cir. 2019).
6. CAL. PENAL CODE § 186.22(b)(1) (West 2020).
7. See *Hernandez-Gonzalez*, 778 F.3d at 809.

Virginia’s criminal street gang participation statute⁸ was not a crime involving moral turpitude.⁹

Unfortunately, the decisions in *Hernandez-Gonzalez* and *Cabrera* only serve as persuasive authority among the courts of appeals. Even the Fourth and Ninth Circuits have not decided whether the criminal gang statutes of other states in their circuits are crimes involving moral turpitude. Thus, non-citizen gang members, many of whom are Latinx and black,¹⁰ still face a general risk of deportation if convicted under statutes criminalizing street gang activity.

This Note argues that the executive branch’s attempt to remove non-citizens for criminal street gang activity is not an effort to target immoral conduct. Rather, the executive branch is, and has been historically, manipulating the phrase “moral turpitude” to systematically target, condemn, and exclude racial groups deemed socially undesirable. The executive branch pursues this program by relying on longstanding tropes or stereotypes that certain races have inherently immoral traits. Thus, as future courts give legal effect to the INA and determine whether non-citizen racial minorities should be deported for immoral conduct, it is imperative that those courts fully understand the racist presumptions and white supremacist agenda upon which the INA is predicated.

This Note raises two arguments that future courts of appeals ought to consider. First, removing groups of immigrants based on society’s judgment of their alleged uniform immorality is an exercise of white supremacy and is patently racist. Second, any moral judgment which a court may levy on minority immigrant gang members must take into account the United States’ direct role in creating those gangs through foreign intervention, economic exploitation, and the creation of the Americanized ghetto.

Part I examines the phrase “crime involving moral turpitude” and the racist presumptions inherent therein. Part II argues that the phrase’s meaning is unduly influenced by society, politics, media, and the “moral reactions of particular judges,” rather than an objective legal standard.¹¹ Part III illustrates how accepting the government’s arguments in *Hernandez-Gonzalez* and *Cabrera* requires accepting propositions about immigrant gang members that are rooted in white supremacy and further a system of colonialism. This section also raises the United States’ culpability in creating gangs in the first place. It reveals that the United States seeks to issue moral opprobrium on a group formed through colonialism, economic exploitation, and foreign intervention. The U.S. government’s foreign intervention, colonialism, and exploitation that created street gangs ought to mitigate any moral judgment of those gangs that U.S. Courts of Appeals may render.

8. VA. CODE ANN. §18.2-46.2 (West 2020).

9. *Cabrera*, 903 F.3d at 638.

10. As of 2011, Latino and black persons comprised more than three quarters of all gang members in the United States; forty-six percent of all gang members were Latino, and thirty five percent were African American. See *Demographics: Age of Gang Members*, NAT’L YOUTH GANG CTR., <https://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Survey-Analysis/Demographics#anchorregm> [<https://perma.cc/H77F-854Y>].

11. *Jordan v. De George*, 341 U.S. 223, 237-38 (1951) (Jackson, J., dissenting).

I. DEFINING THE PHRASE “CRIME INVOLVING MORAL TURPITUDE”

A. *The Original White Supremacist Trope of Race-Based Morality: The Negro “Rascal”*

Removing non-citizens for moral transgressions is not new. The United States has done so since slavery, employing tropes of the Negro Rascal, Sambo, and coon.¹² Racists used artfully crafted stereotypes during slavery and Reconstruction to justify the enslavement of blacks or their removal. I suggest those tropes are being repurposed today to justify the government’s effort to remove Latinx immigrants through the INA and 8 U.S.C. § 1227(a)(2)(A)(i).

In *Stony the Road: Reconstruction, White Supremacy, and Jim Crow*, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. argues that U.S. society orchestrated a campaign of racial science, journalism, political rhetoric, and folklore to perpetrate a “perverse fiction” of the physical and moral inferiority of blacks in the 1800s during slavery and Reconstruction. This campaign attempted to justify blacks’ continued bondage or removal from the United States if freed. Racial pseudoscience during the 1800s laid the foundation for the concept of race-based morality in the United States. The idea originated in 1796 on the European continent when Austrian scientist Franz Joseph Gall’s embarked into the field of phrenology, the science of “measuring the skull as a means of measuring personality traits within the brain.”¹³ The discipline soon spread to the United States. In 1839, physiologist Samuel Morton published *Crania Americana*, a study which correlated skull sizes of various races with their mental capacities.¹⁴ In Morton’s scheme, Caucasians ranked at the top of the racial hierarchy because they had the largest skull size, which apparently equated to the “highest intellectual achievements.”¹⁵ Caucasians were followed by Mongolians of East Asia, Malaysians of South Asia and the Pacific Islands, Native Americans, and Ethiopians or black people at the bottom.¹⁶ The purported link between a race’s skull size and intelligence laid the basis for the body of racist pseudoscience, which concluded that the smaller skull size of darker races meant they had diminished mental capacity and thus the incapacity to make moral decisions.¹⁷

As the tide began to turn against slavery, pro-slavery American academics and political figures used the allegedly diminished morality and intellectual capacity of black Americans to justify why whites ought naturally to enslave blacks, or remove emancipated blacks from the country.¹⁸ John M. Daniel, the editor of the *Richmond Examiner*, wrote that “[t]he true defense of negro slavery is to be sought in the

12. HENRY L. GATES, JR., *STONY THE ROAD: RECONSTRUCTION, WHITE SUPREMACY, AND THE RISE OF JIM CROW* 56 (2019).

13. Thomas V. DiBacco, *The Frenzy over Phrenology*, WASH. POST (Mar. 8, 1994), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/wellness/1994/03/08/the-frenzy-over-phrenology/c7f08143-c219-45fcb93e-5c85317b3e1a/> [https://perma.cc/W9CY-YCKS].

14. Samuel George Morton, *CRANIA AMERICANA; OR, A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE SKULLS OF VARIOUS ABORIGINAL NATIONS OF NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA* 5-7 (John Pennington ed., 1839).

15. *Id.*

16. *Id.*

17. GATES, *supra* note 12, at 60.

18. *Id.* at 63-65.

sciences.”¹⁹ In 1851, doctor James Cartwright argued that blacks’ “inferior” physical characteristics were symptoms of a disease, “Dysaesthesia Aethiopica,” or “Rascality,” which caused them to engage in “much mischief, which appears as if intentional [as] mostly owing to the stupidity of mind and insensibility of the nerves induced by the disease.”²⁰ Cartwright observed, “They break, waste, and destroy everything they handle—abuse horses and cattle—tear, burn or rend their own clothing . . . steal . . . wander about at night, and keep in half nodding sleep during the day. They slight their work . . . for pure mischief.”²¹ Moreover, Cartwright argued free blacks naturally exhibited these behaviors in an environment absent slavery.²² Since even free blacks purportedly demonstrated these behaviors, academics believed these characteristics must be inherent within the black race rather than learned or developed. Moreover, the scientific community also thought that blacks would continue to exhibit these destructive behaviors in the United States if freed, and so they must be removed from the country altogether.

President Abraham Lincoln and much of the nation generally shared Cartwright’s view about blacks’ inferior moral nature. As a result, white supremacists co-opted the pseudo-scientific studies, using their conclusions as evidence to support campaigns to remove blacks from the United States if they were to be emancipated. President Lincoln stated that blacks were a “troublesome presence” in the United States.²³ When Lincoln spoke of his thoughts on the “Negro Problem,”²⁴ he said, “Free them, and make them politically and socially our equals? . . . My own feelings will not admit of this, and if mine would, we well know that those of the great mass of white people will not.”²⁵ President Lincoln went so far as to spearhead an effort to remove blacks from the United States once freed, naming James Mitchell the Commissioner of Emigration to oversee the colonization or repatriation of freed blacks to Africa, and securing a congressional appropriation of funding for the project.²⁶

Failing to eject free blacks after Emancipation, Gates argues that southern “Redemptionists” in the Reconstruction south borrowed racist pseudoscientific findings to create and disseminate stereotypes of blacks that would garner public support for laws that segregated and disenfranchised African Americans as an alternative to removal. Indeed, Gates suggests the Redemptionists were motivated to wage their

19. *The True Foundation of Slavery*, NAT’L ERA, Jan. 27, 1853, at 14, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=K6kyChav4UkC&dat=18530127&printsec=frontpage&hl=en> [<https://perma.cc/BU7U-BZC6>].

20. Samuel A. Cartwright, *Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race*, in 11 DEBOW’S REVIEW 64-74 (July 1851), reproduced by PBS, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3106t.html> [<https://perma.cc/H7KD-ZSHE>].

21. *Id.*

22. *Id.*

23. Nikole Hannah-Jones, *Our Founding Ideals of Liberty and Equality Were False When They Were Written. Black Americans Fought to Make Them True. Without This Struggle, America Would Have No Democracy at All*, N.Y. TIMES, Aug. 18, 2019, at 24.

24. Whether to emancipate enslaved blacks, and if so, whether integrate them into U.S. society or expel them from the United States altogether.

25. Hannah-Jones, *supra* note 23.

26. *Id.*

propaganda campaign to reclaim the legislative halls of southern states because they believed that blacks were intellectually and temperamentally incapable of governing. Henry W. Grady, editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* and namesake of the University of Georgia College of Journalism and Mass Communication, provides a glimpse into the minds of the predicament that white southerners faced—a Reconstruction government led by former slaves turned black statesmen:

In less than twelve months from the day he walked down the furrow a slave . . . a negro dictated in the legislative halls from which Davis and Calhoun had gone forth, the policy of twelve commonwealths. . . From the proven incapacity of that day has he far advanced? . . . [I]s he a safer, more intelligent citizen now than then?²⁷

As Nathaniel S. Shaler bluntly wrote, it was “clear that the inherited qualities of the negroes to a great degree unfit them to carry the burden of our own civilization.”²⁸

The African American stereotypes employed during Jim Crow laid the foundation for the modern tropes of black and Latinx immigrants, particularly the stereotype of the depraved criminal and rapist. Possibly the most prominent stereotype promulgated during Jim Crow was that black men had a “natural propensity to rape,” especially in “packs” of two because of the purported inherent bestial, impulsive, and depraved nature of African Americans. The *Charlotte News* published an article in 1909, describing a “black brute” who attempted to carry out his “fiendish designs . . . on four white women in two days,” highlighting the insatiable nature of black men to rape.²⁹ The article asked: “But what about next time? Because surely there would be a next time.”³⁰ In 1892, the *Memphis Daily Commercial* published an article stating “the frequency of these lynchings calls to attention to the frequency of the crimes which cause lynching,” highlighting the “barbarism” with which “roving Negro ruffians” allegedly commit the crime of raping white women.³¹

It is then evident that American conceptions of race-based immorality and inferiority originate from pseudoscientific stereotypes about blacks during slavery and Reconstruction. The U.S. government, academic circles, and mainstream society relied on tropes about the propensities of the “Negro Rascal” to justify removing blacks from the country or keeping them enslaved. Discussed below, many white Americans continue to uniformly categorize all racial minority immigrant gang members as “violent animals” and “rapists” in an effort to generate public fear and support for harsh criminal penalties or deportation. Just as Redemptionist southern states relied on scientifically supported race-traits to remove or subjugate the

27. Henry W. Grady, *The South and Her Problems*, in *THE COMPLETE ORATIONS AND SPEECHES OF HENRY W. GRADY* 23, 30 (Edwin DuBois Shurter ed., 1910).

28. Nathaniel S. Shaler, *The Negro Problem*, ATLANTIC (Nov. 1884), <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1884/11/the-negro-problem/531366/> [<https://perma.cc/Y65P-BF7S>].

29. *White Women in Danger*, CHARLOTTE NEWS, reprinted in SALISBURY (NC) POST, Dec. 21, 1909.

30. *Id.*

31. Ida B. Wells, *More Rapes, More Lynchings*, in *SOUTHERN HORRORS AND OTHER WRITINGS: THE ANTI-LYNCHING CAMPAIGN OF IDA B. WELLS, 1892-1900*, 62-63 (Jacqueline J. Royster ed., 1997).

“troublesome” Negro race, so would Congress use the proxy of “crimes involving moral turpitude” in the Immigration Act of 1917, and later the INA to exclude those races it thought were predisposed to immoral conduct.

B. Presumptions of Race-Based Morality in the Immigration Act of 1917

1. Race-Based Morality Shifted During the Progressive Era to Target Non-Anglo-Saxon European Immigrants

Racial pseudoscience and uniform moral judgments about race dominated elitist circles during the early twentieth century Progressive Era. However, Progressive Era racial science shifted focus away from the moral ineptitude of blacks and focused on that of non-Anglo Saxon Europeans. The Progressive Era’s racial stereotyping that underlies the INA is distinct from the notion of raced-based morality of Reconstruction in two important ways. First, the eugenics movement characteristic of the Progressive Era transformed racial pseudoscience from studies in academic journals into a full-fledged social theory. British biologist Francis Galton, credited as the originator of the term “eugenics,” argued that the human race could and should “shape and control nature through the application of science and technology,” particularly by selective breeding and cohabitation to “create a genetically superior race and to eliminate an inferior race.”³² Second, white Americans created a hierarchy of whites into different “races” that originated from various nations in Europe, restructuring the previous divisions of white and nonwhite (i.e., black). Progressive Era eugenics developed in response to a large influx of Eastern and Southern Europeans, who were now viewed as inferior to Western Europeans.

Despite this shift, both Progressive Era and Reconstruction Era race-based morality relied on scientific studies. Progressive Era race stereotypes are rooted in Herbert Spencer’s 1863 publication, *Principles of Biology*, where he promulgated a theory of social Darwinism. Subsequently, sociologists looked for data to prove Spencer’s theory, that Anglo-Saxons were the inherently superior and dominant race as opposed to whites from other parts of Europe.³³ The 1890 census provided sociologists with the data to support their conclusions. The census revealed, among other things, that the mortality rate of blacks was higher than that of whites.³⁴ The census also showed that blacks and non-Anglo Saxon Europeans had higher crime rates than Anglo-Saxons.³⁵ In *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, Frederick Hoffman interpreted this raw data by positing that racial minorities’ higher mortality rates were caused by their “self-destructive tendencies.”³⁶ These sociological studies provided the basis for the construction of a racial and moral hierarchy where “Anglo-

32. Adam S. Cohen, *Harvard’s Eugenics Era*, HARV. MAG. (Mar. to Apr. 2016), <https://harvardmagazine.com/2016/03/harvards-eugenics-era> [https://perma.cc/LL2J-UWEJ].

33. KHALIL MUHAMMAD, *THE CONDEMNATION OF BLACKNESS: RACE, CRIME, AND THE MAKING OF MODERN URBAN AMERICA* 24 (2010).

34. *Id.* at 35.

35. *Id.*

36. MUHAMMAD, *supra* note 33, at 35.

Saxons naturally dominated the Celts and Mediterranean peoples of Europe, and whites naturally dominated blacks in America.”³⁷

Though the theory began in mostly elitist academic circles, most notably at Harvard University,³⁸ newspapers and magazines, particularly in the Northeast, soon disseminated the racial hierarchy outside of academia to the mass public. This included writing that “the ‘belligerent Irishman,’ the ‘tight-fisted Scotsman,’ and the ‘dumb Swede’ were inherently less objectionable than the ‘lazy, improvident, child-like, irresponsible, chicken-stealing, crap-shooting, policy-playing-razor-toting, immoral and criminal’ Negro.”³⁹ Concepts of race-based morality were widely accepted among the general public and would shape the construction of subsequent legislation.

2. Congress Placed the “Crime Involving Moral Turpitude” Section into the Immigration Act of 1917 to Exclude Eastern and Southern European Races

The legislative history of the Immigration Act of 1917 demonstrates that Congress used the nebulous phrase “moral turpitude” as a proxy to exclude migrants with disfavored “racial vices or habits.”⁴⁰ A congressional commission recommended ten years prior that Congress pass new legislation to restrict the influx of races deemed undesirable; they were regarded as unskilled laborers, polygamists, intellectually disabled, criminals, or of unfit moral character.⁴¹ Congress looked to race (truly nationality) as a proxy for those qualities. Senator Reed stated in a floor debate, “the purpose of this [Act] is to exclude the peoples from the south of Europe”⁴²—those undesirables—and “preserve the purity of our race”⁴³ from those with inferior qualities. One 1914 House Committee Report took care to note Southern and Eastern European immigrants were generally unskilled laborers, with an “absence of family life.”⁴⁴ Congress understood that including the moral turpitude clause in the statute would “cut out nearly fifty percent of South Italians, more than thirty-five percent of Greeks, Poles, Syrians, and other of the undesirable classes . . . people that are becoming a menace to the economic conditions of our country,” while “those from north-western Europe will not be affected at all.”⁴⁵

Thus, Congress has long used morality as a proxy for race to exclude immigrants of certain “undesirable races.” Congress sought to exclude Eastern and Southern Europeans by creating certain standards for admission in the Immigration Act of 1917: skilled laborers of moral character. By excluding immigrants lacking moral

37. *Id.* at 24-25.

38. *See generally* Cohen, *supra* note 32.

39. *Id.* at 26.

40. *Hindu Immigration: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Immigration*, 63rd Cong. 22 (1914) (statement of Congressman James Manahan).

41. *Id.*

42. *Id.*

43. *Id.*

44. H.R. DOC. NO. 63-149, at 4 (1913). The record also noted that it was particularly true that Italians committed homicides and crimes of violence disproportionately. *Id.* at 3.

45. H.R. DOC. NO. 62-559, at 4 (1912).

turpitude from the United States, Congress sought to exclude Eastern and Southern Europeans while permitting Western Europeans—purportedly skilled laborers of moral character—to enter. As the next section will explore, jurists have long recognized the elusiveness of the phrase “moral turpitude,” and the danger in reaching uniform conclusions about morality on a group-wide basis.

II. THE BOARD OF IMMIGRATION APPEALS’ DEFINITION OF CRIME INVOLVING MORAL TURPITUDE IMPROPERLY RELIES ON SHIFTING SOCIETAL VIEWS

Congress did not define the term “crime involving moral turpitude” in the Immigration Act of 1917.⁴⁶ The phrase lacked a settled public meaning at that time.⁴⁷ Although it was likely that “Congress contemplated that the agency charged with administering the statute would define the term, and specifically would tailor the definition . . . [t]he Board of Immigration Appeals has done neither,” at least not to any discernable level.⁴⁸ To the extent the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) attempted to define a “crime involving moral turpitude,” courts have consistently criticized these attempts as a “murky statutory standard”⁴⁹ “in all its vagueness, rife with contradiction,”⁵⁰ that is “amorphous,”⁵¹ “nebulous,”⁵² and “plastic.”⁵³

The BIA defines a crime involving moral turpitude as a crime that is “inherently base, vile, or depraved, contrary to the accepted rules of morality and the duties owed between man and man, either one’s fellow man or society in general.”⁵⁴ Many courts distill this definition, generally holding that every crime involving moral turpitude requires two elements: (1) a depraved mental state and (2) morally reprehensible conduct. However, in Judge Posner’s concurrence in *Arias v. Lynch*, where the Seventh Circuit examined whether the BIA’s determination that an immigrant using a false social security number was a crime involving moral turpitude, he noted the words in the definition were “gibberish” and “virtually dropped from the vocabulary of modern Americans.”⁵⁵ He queried, “What does ‘public conscience’ mean? What does inherently base, vile, or depraved . . . mean, and how do these terms differ from the ‘duties owed between persons or to society in general’? And—urgently—what is depravity?”⁵⁶ In his view, the “repetition of clichés attempting to define moral

46. See *Restriction of Immigration: Hearings Before the H. Comm. on Immigration and Naturalization*, 64th Cong. 8 (1916).

47. “Mr. Sabath[:] ‘But you know that a crime involving moral turpitude has not been defined. No one can really say what is meant by saying a crime involving moral turpitude.’” *Restriction of Immigration: Hearings Before the H. Comm. on Immigration and Naturalization*, 64th Cong. 8 (1916) (statement of Rep. Adolph J. Sabath, Member, H. Comm. on Immigration and Naturalization).

48. *Islas-Veloz v. Whitaker*, 914 F.3d 1249, 1258 (9th Cir. 2019).

49. *Bobadilla v. Holder*, 679 F.3d 1052, 1053 (8th Cir. 2012).

50. *Arias v. Lynch*, 834 F.3d 823, 835 (7th Cir. 2016) (Judge Posner, concurring).

51. *Partkya v. Attorney General*, 417 F.3d 408, 409 (3d Cir. 2005).

52. *Matter of Flores*, 17 I. & N. Dec. 225, 227 (BIA 1980).

53. *Ali v. Mukasey*, 521 F.3d 737, 739 (7th Cir. 2008).

54. *Matter of Zaragoza-Vaquero*, 26 I. & N. Dec. 814, 815 (BIA 2016).

55. *Arias*, 834 F.3d at 831 (Judge Posner, concurring).

56. *Id.*

turpitude” serve to confuse rather than clarify.⁵⁷

The BIA also states that crimes involving moral turpitude are *malum in se* (bad in and of itself), as opposed to *malum prohibitum* (bad simply because it is illegal).⁵⁸ This distinction is problematic for at least two reasons. First, as Justice Jackson’s dissent in *Jordan v. De George* points out, this distinction originally made at common law “freely blended religious conceptions of sin with legal conceptions of crime.”⁵⁹ Blackstone defined crimes *malum in se* as “crimes forbidden by the superior laws” because they violate “rights then which God and nature have established . . . natural rights such as are life and liberty, . . . the worship of God, the maintenance of children.”⁶⁰ Whereas “crimes *malum prohibitum* enjoin only positive duties . . . without mixture of moral guilt”⁶¹ such as “jaywalking and running a stoplight.”⁶² This distinction fails to guide litigants and the court, because “[i]rrationality is inherent in the task of translating the religious and ethical connotations of the phrase into legal decisions.”⁶³

Second, the distinction between crimes *malum in se* and *malum prohibitum* is a “paper thin” distinction.⁶⁴ The Ninth Edition of Black’s Law Dictionary notes “the distinction between offenses *mala in se* and offenses *mala prohibita* . . . has been criticized repeatedly.”⁶⁵ About a century and a half ago, the distinction was said to be “not founded upon any sound principle” and which had “long since exploded.”⁶⁶

Attacking the ambiguity of “crime involving moral turpitude” is not new. In *Jordan v. De George*, the Supreme Court held that an Italian non-citizen’s conviction for conspiracy to violate the Internal Revenue Code constituted a crime involving moral turpitude under the Immigration Act of 1917.⁶⁷ In dicta, the majority concluded *sua sponte* that the statute was not unconstitutionally vague, although this was unnecessary for the holding and neither party raised the issue or briefed it.⁶⁸ Justices Jackson, Black, and Frankfurter dissented from the majority’s holding and subsequent conclusion on the vagueness issue. Those three justices found the government’s proffered definition of “crime involving moral turpitude” unworkable, concluding it was an “undefined and undefinable standard.”⁶⁹

Justice Jackson, writing for the three dissenting justices, reasoned this standard was unworkable because it would require courts to divine “the moral standards that prevail in contemporary society to determine whether violations are generally

57. *Jordan v. De George*, 341 U.S. 223, 239 (1951).

58. *Matter of Flores*, 17 I. & N. Dec. 225, 227 (BIA 1980).

59. *De George*, 341 U.S. at 237 (1951) (Jackson, J., dissenting).

60. *Id.* at 237 n. 10 (Jackson, J., dissenting) (internal quotation omitted).

61. *Id.*

62. *Malum in se*, BLACK’S LAW DICTIONARY (11th ed. 2009).

63. *De George*, 341 U.S. at 239.

64. *Arias v. Lynch*, 834 F.3d 823, 832 (7th Cir. 2016) (Judge Posner, concurring).

65. *Malum in se*, *supra* note 63.

66. *De George*, 341 U.S. at 240.

67. *Id.* at 229.

68. *Id.*

69. *Id.* at 232–45 (Jackson, J., dissenting).

considered essentially immoral.”⁷⁰ Indeed, “moral standards . . . may not be uniform in all parts of the country, nor in all levels of contemporary society.”⁷¹ They can also change over time. Justice Jackson also observed that a court’s conclusion about which crimes involved moral turpitude depended “upon the moral reactions of particular judges to particular offenses,” and “end up by condemning all that we personally disapprove and for no better than that we disapprove of it.”⁷² This type of analysis, Justice Jackson stated, constituted government by men, not by law.⁷³

The actual dispositive factor for whether a non-citizen’s conviction for criminal street gang activity constitutes a crime involving moral turpitude is not the legal standard articulated by BIA. It is society’s current approval or disapproval towards groups of minorities engaging in criminal activity. The next section will explore how the government’s conclusion—that criminal street gang activity is “depraved”—requires accepting the uniform characterization of all members in the group as bestial criminals, as modern rhetoric has indeed attempted to cast them.

III. EXPOSING THE FLAWS OF THE GOVERNMENT’S ARGUMENT THAT CRIMINAL STREET GANG ACTIVITY IS A CRIME INVOLVING MORAL TURPITUDE

A. *Hernandez-Gonzalez v. Holder Rejected on Race-Neutral Terms an Issue with Clear Racial Implications*

The government has twice argued that criminal gang participation statutes are categorically crimes involving moral turpitude—once in *Hernandez-Gonzalez* and again in *Cabrera*. The government’s argument relies on two premises rooted in white supremacy. First, to accept the government’s argument, the court must conclude that every member of a gang is evil and depraved regardless of their level of involvement in the gang, or their motive for joining. Second, the government’s argument requires a court to determine immigrant gang criminal activity is morally reprehensible conduct. But this conclusion does not consider or adequately weigh the United States’ white-settler, imperial, and capitalist practices that created the conditions for the gang activity to occur.

In *Hernandez-Gonzalez v. Holder*, the Ninth Circuit held that a conviction under California’s sentence enhancement statute for gang related crime, California Penal Code § 186.22(b)(1), was not categorically a crime involving moral turpitude. Following the Supreme Court’s test articulated in *Taylor v. United States*,⁷⁴ the Ninth Circuit applied the categorical approach of determining whether a crime involved moral turpitude. This test compares the BIA’s definition of a crime involving moral turpitude to the elements of the state offense, without considering the facts

70. *Id.* at 237-38.

71. *Id.* at 238.

72. *Id.* at 235-38.

73. *Id.* at 240.

74. See *Taylor v. United States*, 495 U.S. 575, 600-01 (1990) (instructing courts to use the “categorical approach” to determine whether a specific offense meets the definition of “violent felony” in the Armed Career Criminal Act, which authorizes a sentence enhancement for any defendant convicted of a “violent felony”).

of any defendant's particular conviction. The BIA then determines whether the minimum conduct and *mens rea* necessary for a conviction under the state law meets the federal crime involving moral turpitude standard.⁷⁵ However, if less exacting criminal activity is punishable under the state law than what the federal standard requires, the state law is not a crime involving moral turpitude.

The California statute before the court in *Hernandez-Gonzalez* added a two-year sentence for “any person who is convicted of a felony committed for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in association with any criminal street gang, with the specific intent to promote, further, or assist in any criminal conduct by gang members.”⁷⁶ It also prohibited certain felonies which the BIA previously held were not independently crimes involving moral turpitude (e.g., simple assault and battery).⁷⁷ The government nevertheless argued that even an innocuous crime, when done to “promote, further, or assist criminal activity by gang members” is transformed into a crime involving moral turpitude.⁷⁸ In other words, the government argued that any crime committed to “promote, further, or assist criminal activity by gang members” necessarily requires a depraved state of mind, and is morally reprehensible conduct.

The Ninth Circuit disagreed with the government's first argument, reasoning it would require a “moral judgment as to the nature and uniformity of [gang members'] intent,” despite the “range of reasons motivating young people to associate with gangs,” such as protection of a family member or friend.⁷⁹ The court also rejected the government's second argument that the conduct of criminal street gang activity was “inherently reprehensible” because “[c]riminal gangs pose a serious danger to public safety and have a taxing burden on society and our moral culture.”⁸⁰ The Ninth Circuit stated that the government's argument “mistakes mere criminality for moral turpitude.”⁸¹ The government failed to explain why the conduct was inherently base, vile, or depraved as opposed to simply criminal conduct that society rejects. In other words, the Ninth Circuit rejected the Government's argument because the government explained why criminal gang activity is *malum prohibitum*, but not why it is *malum in se*.

Ultimately, the Ninth Circuit held that the California statute was not a crime involving moral turpitude. Unfortunately, the court's rationale speaks in completely race-neutral terms and without reference to how the removal of mostly Latinx immigrants under this statute furthers a regime of white-settler colonialism entrenched in

75. “[I]n determining whether a state crime of conviction constitutes a crime involving moral turpitude (CMT) we apply the categorical approach as set forth in *Taylor v. United States*, 495 U.S. 575 (1990). ‘Under the categorical approach, we compare the elements of the crime to the generic definition of moral turpitude and decide whether the [minimum] conduct proscribed in the statute is broader than, and so does not categorically fall within the generic definition.’” *Hernandez-Gonzalez v. Holder*, 778 F.3d 793, 801 (9th Cir. 2015) (internal citations omitted).

76. CAL. PENAL CODE § 186.22(b)(1) (West 2020).

77. *Hernandez-Gonzalez v. Holder*, 778 F.3d 793, 808 n.16 (9th Cir. 2015).

78. *Id.* at 802.

79. *Id.* at 806.

80. *Id.* at 808.

81. *Id.*

a white supremacist racial hierarchy. Because the Ninth Circuit failed to grapple with the racist presumptions lurking in the interstices of the government's premises, this section will explore them for the benefit of future courts who may consider the issue. The next subsections will explore two of the government's arguments which rely on racist assumptions. First, Section III.B will counter the government's arguments that all immigrant gang members are "depraved." Next, Section III.C will counter the government's argument that criminal street gang activity is inherently reprehensible conduct.

B. Condemnation of Latinness: Creating the MS-13 Animal

Though the government argued that all gang members are uniformly depraved, a careful examination reveals that this trope has been tried and debunked. Like the Negro Rascal and the belligerent Irishman, the depraved MS-13 animal is too a fabricated trope of white supremacy. An unsubstantiated stereotype cannot form a legitimate tool in the law. To decide the legal question of whether an individual is depraved based on a race-based stereotype is to fall into the very trap that Justice Jackson warned of in his *De George* dissent.

The trope casting Latinx (specifically Central American) migrants as uniformly depraved began with rhetoric and media reports in the 1980's and 1990's. This stereotype hides beneath the surface of DHS's arguments. American intervention in this time period led war refugees from Central America and Southeast Asia to flee to the United States. Those groups concentrated in large cities like Los Angeles, and there they formed criminal street gangs like MS-13 or "La Mara Salvatrucha" and the 18th Street Gang. The gangs spread to other cities such as New York and Chicago, and a crime wave ensued.⁸² The gang violence in those cities was characterized as a "scourge"⁸³ that "posed a threat to the American people."⁸⁴ Elected officials like Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley framed a rhetorical war of immigrant gangs versus society and promised to "battle to reclaim our streets and our children from the gangs."⁸⁵ More importantly, American society imputed the depravity of the criminal activity to the individual gang member. Then-First Lady Hillary Clinton characterized gang members as "superpredators—no conscience, no empathy."⁸⁶ The Clinton administration responded to these pressures by deporting thousands of MS-13 members to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras under the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act.

82. William Triplett, *Gang Crisis*, 14 CQ RESEARCHER 421, 435 (2004).

83. Matt Canham & Tim Sullivan, *Asian American Gangs a Scourge: Violent Rivals in the Vietnamese, Lao, and Cambodia Communities are Settling Scores at Malls, Amusement Parks; Asian Gangs Target Their Own People*, SALT LAKE TRIB., Apr. 14, 2003, at D1.

84. *Gangs: A National Crisis: Hearings Before the Sen. Comm. on the Judiciary*, 105th Cong. 29 (1997) (statement of Sen. Charles Grassley, Member, Sen. Comm. on the Judiciary).

85. Mayor Richard M. Daley, *Inaugural Address*, CHI. PUB. LIBR. (May 6, 1991), <https://www.chipublib.org/mayor-richard-m-daley-inaugural-address-1991/> [<https://perma.cc/FK84-AFVY>].

86. Allison Graves, *Did Hillary Clinton Call African-American Youth Superpredators?*, POLITIFACT (Aug. 28, 2016), <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/aug/28/reince-priebus/did-hillary-clinton-call-african-american-youth-su/> [<https://perma.cc/T7CF-KMDG>].

The trope persists today. First as a candidate, President Trump renewed a propaganda war against “illegal immigration.” Loosely moored in fact, this propaganda paints groups of Latinx immigrants and vicious street gangs all in the same broad stroke. President Trump’s statements link gang violence to Latinx immigration and deportation as the remedy to fight against gangs.⁸⁷ In his presidential campaign announcement speech, Trump spoke of Mexican immigrants saying, “[t]hey’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.”⁸⁸ President Trump reportedly queried to U.S. Senators in an Oval Office meeting why “all these people from shithole countries come here?”⁸⁹ The White House issued a press release in 2018 to educate the public on “What You Need to Know About the Violent Animals of MS-13,” which stated President Trump would “bring these violent animals”—not criminals or people, but ‘animals’—“to justice.”⁹⁰ The thing is, this trope is unfounded: “Research has shown virtually no support for the enduring assumption that increases in immigration are associated with increases of crime.”⁹¹

This period of American society—that is, from the 1980s to the present—is merely another iteration of the condemnation of a minority group as criminal. It is another cycle of what minorities experienced during the Reconstruction Era towards African Americans, and in the early 1900s towards Eastern and Southern Europeans.⁹² As *Atlantic* contributor Ibram Kendi noted, President Trump’s statements reveal with “bracing clarity” a re-kindling in the American consciousness of a racial hierarchy and inherent race traits reminiscent of twentieth century progressive social Darwinism.⁹³

As Justice Jackson argued in his *De George* dissent, the “crime involving moral turpitude” statute is fundamentally flawed because it requires judges to use amorphous social opprobrium as an instrument to determine whether crimes, when committed by certain groups of people are immoral. In this case, racist rhetoric towards Latinx gangs since the 1980s has shaped the views of judges or members of society. So, society’s view towards Latinx immigrants, rather than an objective legal standard, will determine whether a non-citizen gang member’s criminal street gang activity

87. “President Trump has linked gang violence to immigration rates and advocated stricter immigration enforcement as a way to fight gangs. He frequently cites murders and other crimes committed by members of the notorious MS-13 gang, including some who entered the country illegally from Central America.” Jane Fullerton Lemons, *Gang Violence*, 28 CQ RESEARCHER 465, 465 (2018).

88. Michelle Ye Hee Lee, *Donald Trump’s False Comments Connecting Mexican Immigrants and Crime*, WASH. POST (July 8, 2015), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2015/07/08/donald-trumps-false-comments-connecting-mexican-immigrants-and-crime/> [https://perma.cc/FQJ2-LMSF].

89. Ibram X. Kendi, *The Day ‘Shithole’ Entered the Presidential Lexicon*, ATLANTIC (Jan. 13, 2019), <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/01/shithole-countries/580054/> [https://perma.cc/2GQJ-H8CD].

90. Press Release, *What You Need to Know About the Violent Animals of MS-13*, White House (May 21, 2018), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/need-know-violent-animals-ms-13/> [https://perma.cc/FU86-89FL].

91. Fullerton Lemons, *supra* note 88, at 468.

92. *Id.* at 474-75.

93. Kendi, *supra* note 90.

constitutes a crime involving moral turpitude. As Justice Jackson noted, this is problematic because society will inevitably change which group it holds in contempt. In 2019, media ridicule and populist contempt target Latinx immigrants.⁹⁴ But changing the year will easily yield a different racial socially vilified group. If the first question in a court's analysis—whether all members of one group are depraved—depends on “the moral standards that prevail in contemporary society,”⁹⁵ then the question truly turns on society's opinion of that group and not on an objective legal standard.

C. The Latinx Subjugated Knowledge: How U.S. Colonialism Bears Moral Responsibility For Creating Latinx Street Gangs

The government's next argument, that committing a crime in association with a gang is immoral conduct, ignores the complete history of minority street gangs in the U.S. and why they formed in the first instance. The government conveniently ignores how the United States created the conditions for migrant gang culture to thrive.

This section provides an alternative epistemological framework to understand the development of Latinx gangs and understand whether their conduct is indeed immoral. Michael Foucault presents the notion of an epistemological oppression of marginalized groups.⁹⁶ In *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault argues that the official history articulated by the dominant group becomes the hegemonic epistemological framework of understanding past history and present conditions, while the subjugated group's understanding of those same events becomes “subjugated knowledge.”⁹⁷ He writes, “the history of some is not the history of others. . . . What looks like right, law, or obligation from the point of power looks like the abuse of power, violence, and exaction when it is seen from the viewpoint of new discourse.”⁹⁸ As Foucauldian scholar José Medina explains, Foucault's subjugated knowledges are the marginalized perspectives deemed unqualified, unworthy, or simply incoherent with the prevailing epistemological paradigm, and so are ignored.⁹⁹ These knowledges are often marginalized, because the majority deems them “hierarch[ically] inferior knowledges” that are “below the required level of erudition or scientificity.”¹⁰⁰ The discrediting of these perspectives may be a result of the oppression which subjugated these perspectives in the first instance. Understanding the Latinx subjugated knowledge will call into question whether Latinx street gang activity is truly immoral or reprehensible conduct.

94. Fullerton Lemons, *supra* note 88, at 472.

95. *Jordan v. De George*, 341 U.S. 223, 237-38 (1951).

96. MICHAEL FOUCAULT, *SOCIETY MUST BE DEFENDED*, LECTURES AT THE COLLÈGE DE FRANCE, 1975-1976 BOOK V, 7-9 (Picador 2003).

97. *Id.*

98. *Id.* at 66.

99. José Medina, *Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology of Resistance: Counter-Memory, Epistemic Friction, and Guerilla Pluralism*, 12 FOUCAULT STUDIES 9, 11 (2011).

100. FOUCAULT, *supra* note 97, at 7-10.

Critical Legal Scholars have indeed integrated Foucault's tradition into legal scholarship. For example, Mari Matsuda uses a "bottom-up approach" to support her argument for reparations for Japanese and Hawaiian victims of United States colonization by articulating the subjugated knowledges of those groups.¹⁰¹ In doing so, she claims to adopt a "new epistemological source" similar to Foucault's subjugated knowledge that looks to "the actual experience, history, culture, and intellectual tradition of people of color," and "those who have suffered through history" particularly fit when deciding legal issues that affect them and their historical oppression.¹⁰²

Like Foucault and Matsuda, this section takes a bottom-up approach to articulate the Latinx Foucaultian counter-history of the United States' imperialist actions to displace, exploit, and oppress peoples of Mexico and Central America. In doing so, it provides an alternative epistemological framework by which scholars, the public, and the courts can understand the criminal activity of Latinx gangs. This counter-history provides a new normative perspective that might guide a judge or society's decision of whether Latinx immigrant criminal gang activity is immoral, demonstrating that much Latinx migrant gang activity results from resisting decades of colonial white settlerism, displacement, exploitation, and ghettoization.

1. The United State as a White Settler Imperialist Machine

Under a theory of American exceptionalism, the United States attempts to distinguish itself as an experiment of democracy in contrast to the European absolutist and imperialist monarchies which preceded it. But the United States shares more with its imperialist forebearers than the white Americentric version of history recognizes.¹⁰³

The Latinx counter-history reframes the United States as a global project of white settler colonialism, making it more like its imperial European forebearers. Recent scholars argue the United States developed a distinct form of global colonial rule similar to the European colonial powers: white settler colonialism.¹⁰⁴ Kelly Lytle Hernández explains that a white settler colony is a project of "building a new, permanent, reproductive, and racially exclusive society" through the displacement of an indigenous group and for the benefit of the white settlers.¹⁰⁵ Aziz Rana suggests that white settler colonialism is a "project of settlement" with the aim of creating "emancipatory conditions for self-government" for the in-group, while expropriating and exploiting out-groups like Native Americans, formerly enslaved blacks, as well as

101. See Mari Matsuda, *Looking to the Bottom: Critical Legal Studies and Reparations*, 22 HARV. C.R.-C.L. L. REV. 323 (1987).

102. *Id.*

103. See Cass Sunstein, *The Real Meaning of American Exceptionalism*, BLOOMBERG (Sept. 23, 2013), <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2013-09-23/the-real-meaning-of-american-exceptionalism> [<https://perma.cc/VVE8-VXP4>].

104. See, e.g., Aziz Rana, *Colonialism and Constitutional Memory*, 5 U.C. IRVINE L. REV. 263, 263-77 (2015).

105. KELLY LYTLE HERNÁNDEZ, CITY OF INMATES: CONQUEST, REBELLION, AND THE RISE OF HUMAN CAGING IN LOS ANGELES, 1771-1965, 7 (2017).

Latinx and Asian immigrants through land extraction, labor extraction, and economic exploitation.¹⁰⁶

In *Colonialism and Constitutional Memory*, Rana collects evidence suggesting that the United States' purpose was to further the twin aims of white settler colonialism: white liberty and indigenous exclusion/conquest.¹⁰⁷ Rana notes the language in the nation's founding documents "intertwined arguments for [white] freedom with a clear drive to pacify those external threats posed by both excluded slaves and expropriated Indians."¹⁰⁸ For example, the Declaration of Independence accused the British Crown of "excit[ing] domestic insurrections amongst us, and . . . endeavor[ing] to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages."¹⁰⁹

Moreover, before the Civil War, Democratic nominee Stephen Douglas stated in the Lincoln-Douglas presidential debates: "[T]his government was made on the white basis, by white men, for the benefit of white men and their posterity forever, and should be administered by white men and none others."¹¹⁰ President Abraham Lincoln argued the solution to the "Negro Problem" post-Civil War was to remove African Americans through forced emigration, for African Americans were "a troublesome presence" who were incompatible with a democracy intended only for white people.¹¹¹ Because the Democratic and Republican nominees for President both articulated a shared vision of white settler colonialism, it is likely that a substantial portion of nineteenth century white Americans also subscribed to such a model laying the foundation to forcibly remove people of color in the twentieth century and beyond.

2. White Settler Colonialism Prompted Westward Expansion and Caused the Displacement and Subjugation of Mexican Natives

The United States' westward expansion was an exercise of white-settler colonialism to displace Native Americans and Latinx peoples, and incorporate democratic state governments in those regions for the benefit of white settlers. The United States' involvement in the Mexican-American War is a consequence of westward expansion and resulted in the expropriation of many Mexicans. Mexico lost the war, and by the terms of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico ceded much of its lands to the United States. Native Mexicans living in northern lands, known now as Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah, became incorporated into the U.S. political regime by conquest.¹¹² Juan Gonzalez, creator of the *Harvest of Empire* documentary, suggests that the United States did not want to claim

106. Rana, *supra* note 112, at 265-66.

107. *Id.*

108. *See id.* at 271.

109. THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE para. 29 (U.S. 1776).

110. Senator Stephen Douglas, *Speech at the Third Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Jonesboro, Ill.* (Sept. 15, 1858), *reprinted in* ABRAHAM LINCOLN: SPEECHES AND WRITINGS 1832-1858, 598 (Don E. Fehrenbacher ed., 1989).

111. Hannah-Jones, *supra* note 23.

112. *See* Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, *Mexican American War*, ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Mexican-American-War> [<https://perma.cc/2NW4-PSHY>].

southern parts of the inhabited Mexican territory, which contained a more concentrated population of Mexicans, because it did not want the U.S. democracy contaminated with the Mexican people.¹¹³ Thus, in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the United States sought those northern Mexican territories because it was the most territory with as few Mexicans as possible.

The terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo required Mexicans living in those northern lands to be naturalized into the United States as U.S. citizens,¹¹⁴ but Gonzalez suggests many felt alienated and were in fact excluded by U.S. society.¹¹⁵ After naturalization, the white settler population did not get along well (or at all) with the now Mexican Americans, and white settlers still held racist biases towards that population.¹¹⁶ Mexican Americans were not accepted, but rather treated as second-class citizens and told to go back to their home to Mexico— notwithstanding they were already living in their native land and their “home” now was the United States.¹¹⁷ Mexicans and Mexican Americans felt, and many still feel, that the United States and the homesteading settlers stole this part of their country from their ancestors.¹¹⁸

As a result of this animosity and exclusion, precursors to the modern Latinx criminal street gangs appeared in the region as early as 1890. Small groups of young Mexican men called the *palomilla* (flock of doves) migrated along a path from Mexico to Los Angeles.¹¹⁹ These groups who moved freely through the newly formed, yet permeable, southwest border may indeed be some of the earliest examples of undocumented or illegal immigration under the modern territorial boundary between the United States and Mexico.¹²⁰

Although these “nascent gangs”¹²¹ traveling back and forth between the border did not have legal authorization to enter the United States, surely their gang activity— though illegal—does not warrant the blanket conclusion that their conduct is immoral. It simply cannot be, as the government suggests, that this and all criminal street gang activity is inherently reprehensible. The criminal conduct in which the migrating *palomilla* engaged seems to be a crime of necessity spurred by external geopolitical pressures. To conclude that even innocuous gang activity is immoral would do as the Ninth Circuit stated: “mistake[] criminality for moral turpitude.”¹²²

113. See HARVEST OF EMPIRE (Onyx Films 2012) [hereinafter HARVEST OF EMPIRE documentary].

114. Andrew Glass, *U.S. and Mexico Sign the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Feb. 2, 1848*, POLITICO (Feb. 2, 2019), <https://www.politico.com/story/2019/02/02/us-mexico-treaty-of-guadalupe-hidalgo-1137572> [perma.cc/UC4C-2HMH].

115. See HARVEST OF EMPIRE documentary, *supra* note 121.

116. *Id.*

117. James C. Howell & John P. Moore, *History of Street Gangs in the United States*, NAT’L GANG CTR. BULL., OFF. JUV. JUST. & DELINQ. PREVENTION (BUREAU JUST. ASSISTANCE), May 2010, at 7.

118. See HARVEST OF EMPIRE documentary, *supra* note 121.

119. Howell & Moore *supra* note 125, at 7.

120. *Id.* at 10.

121. *Id.* at 9.

122. *Hernandez-Gonzalez v. Holder*, 778 F.3d 793, 805 (9th Cir. 2015).

3. The United States' Military and Economic Influence Caused Mass Migration of Latinx Groups to the United States

After the close of the western frontier, the United States pursued a white-settler colonialist project in Latin America. Though many people in the United States envisioned the government as defending democracy in these countries, this is an overly simplistic characterization. The United States pursued a capitalist-driven, neocolonial project through investing in the region and implementing military interventions to ensure such investments returned profits to the United States.¹²³

Juan Gonzalez argues that the large Latinx presence in the United States is a direct result of the government's actions in Mexico and Central American countries over many decades through military occupations, invasions, and providing financial support to government and rebel groups, with the objective of protecting the United States' geopolitical and private economic interests.¹²⁴ Gonzalez implicitly identifies the dispossession and exploitation that is characteristic of white settler colonialism. The United States' entanglement with Latin American countries which Gonzalez identified cannot thoroughly be discussed at length here, but a few instances highlight the practices of white settler colonialism common in the U.S. exploitation of Latin America.¹²⁵

The United States' foreign intervention in Latin America traces back to the Spanish American War. After losing the Spanish-American War, Spain relinquished sovereignty over Cuba and ceded Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States as territories. These islands constitute the most explicit forms of U.S. imperialism, as the United States established military outposts and stabilized those areas for American companies to invest and exploit native land and labor. Puerto Rico, Cuba, Guam, and the Philippines contributed significantly to the U.S. economy, as well as U.S. national security. The United States established military outposts in Cuba, Guam, and other territories, using those islands as strategic holdings to protect the democratic government of the United States and its interests abroad. Although these countries contributed land, resources, and security to the United States, the government refused to grant political sovereignty to the islands and initially balked even at incorporating the native inhabitants as citizens. This is consistent with the strategy of white-settler colonialism to expropriate and dispossess without mixing and including. Though the United States eventually granted citizenship to Puerto Ricans in 1917—just in time to draft them for battle in World War I—it was clear that this altruistic action was again motivated by the self-interest of the white settler group.¹²⁶

The United States took a more clandestine approach to colonizing Central American countries like Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador, yet the ensuing instability and warfare still caused massive waves of migrants and refugees to flee to

123. See HARVEST OF EMPIRE documentary, *supra* note 121.

124. *Id.*

125. *Id.*

126. *Id.*

the United States. The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine asserted the U.S. as the police force in the Western hemisphere to protect democracy and liberty. As a result of this policy, the United States both supported and helped overthrow ruthless Latin American dictators and rebel groups to protect U.S. interests abroad, stop the spread of communism, encourage capitalism and free markets, and also to protect U.S. investments.¹²⁷

This period of white-settler colonialism reveals that the United States caused the very “invasion of migrants” which it scorns. The United States reproduced the white-settler colonial project internationally by extracting labor, land, resources, and political security from Latin American countries, while denying Latinx groups the benefits of such activity, and displacing them in the process. In many cases, Latinx peoples from Central America fled their native countries to escape persecution, oppression, genocide, or dire economic consequences caused by U.S. intervention. While some migration may be illegal, and the migrants may engage in criminal activity in groups, that criminal gang activity cannot entirely be categorized as “immoral” as the government would suggest.

4. The Ghetto and the Prison: Incubators for Latinx Migrant Gangs

Those Latinx migrants escaping warfare that America caused fled to cities like Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York.¹²⁸ Under the pressures of economic exploitation and social exclusion, two American institutions of social control—the ghetto and the prison—created the modern migrant street gang.

Loic Wacquant draws parallels between the ghetto and prison, describing them as “kindred institutions of forced confinement,” each “enclosing a stigmatized population . . . to neutralize the material and/or symbolic threat that it poses for the broader society from which it has been extruded.”¹²⁹ Wacquant articulates the reflexive

127. The U.S.’ intervention in Guatemala is demonstrative. The budding multinational conglomerate United Fruit Company, owner of Chiquita Banana, heavily invested in Guatemala. When the United States feared the Guatemalan President Jacobo Árbenz would institute reforms to redistribute land in which United Fruit had an interest, the CIA trained local proxies in guerilla warfare and counterinsurgency tactics, mounted a propaganda campaign labeling President Árbenz as crazy, and engaged in the systematic effort to overthrow of the government in 1954. The United States backed a replacement dictator, Carlos Castillo, but the new government was unstable and the Guatemalan Civil War ensued for thirty years, from 1960 to 1996, during which the CIA-trained government forces retreated to the forest and enacted a mass genocide on the native Mayan people. Though thousands of Guatemalan refugees fled to the United States, during the 1980’s, the United States granted asylum to less than two percent of Guatemalans who applied. *Id.*

Similar themes of intervention, unrest, and migration occurred in El Salvador. The U.S.-backed dictator, Humberto Romero, faced an insurgency which the U.S. government feared could result in a communist uprising. The United States provided more than \$4 billion in military aid to the Romero government, and the CIA trained a cohort of Salvadoran soldiers. When a civil war ensued, the United Nations Truth Finding Commission concluded that the CIA-trained insurgents committed mass killings that wiped out whole villages in El Salvador throughout the 1980’s, and the participated in the assassination of an archbishop of the Catholic Church, Oscar Romero—an outspoken dissident of the Romero regime. The instability caused by the United States led to an increase in 94,000 Salvadoran immigrants in the United States in 1980 to over two million by 2012. *Id.*

128. See Howell & Moore *supra* note 125, at 1-13.

129. Loic Wacquant, *The Prison as the Surrogate Ghetto*, 4 THEORETICAL CRIMINOLOGY 377, 378 (2000).

relationship between the ghetto and prison. He writes the ghetto is an “ethnoracial prison” that engages a dishonored category.¹³⁰ The ghetto is a device of geospatial restriction that enables the dominant group in an urban setting to control a subordinated group with negative symbolic capital like skin color or perceived criminality through two methods: ostracization and exploitation.¹³¹ Relatedly, a prison is a judicial ghetto, a device of social control where the restrictions are enforced by judicial order.¹³² Because persons in a ghetto and prison are both geospatially confined within a limited system of institutions, Wacquant suggests a distinct culture and identity emerges to form a “city within a city.”¹³³

Wacquant’s reflexive relationship between the ghetto and prison explains how Latinx migrants, ostracized and excluded from society, formed criminal street gangs within the ghettos and prisons of Los Angeles. MS-13 specifically was formed by El Salvadoran refugees who migrated to the ghettos or *barrios* of Los Angeles in the 1980s escaping the civil war caused in part by U.S. intervention.¹³⁴ Some of the migrants, alienated and ostracized by their new country and relegated to the ghettos, formed the Mara Salvatrucha Stoners, a group of teenagers who smoked marijuana and listened to rock music.¹³⁵ Imprisoned members of the gang forged an alliance with Mexican Mafia prison gang, La eMe, which helped create MS-13.¹³⁶ The group developed a set of experiences, ostracization, and geospatial confinement characteristic of both the ghetto and prison.¹³⁷

The formation of a migrant criminal street gang, even one as notorious as MS-13, does not warrant an automatic label that each member (or the group) is immoral or depraved as the government suggests. Rather, the ethnoracial group naturally forms because of the coordinate restrictions of a ghetto and prison that are by their purposes meant to stigmatize the members of the group so confined. A court or judge considering this Latinx subjugated knowledge or counter-history must look past the mere existence of the gang and inquire how the gang came to be formed. If courts looked at history, they would see morally mitigating factors that should give a reasonable judge or court pause before concluding that every member of a migrant criminal street gang is immoral or depraved. The Ninth Circuit got it right when it noted, “of course, all gang-related criminal conduct is, at some level, both serious and morally questionable, but not all gang related criminal conduct necessarily involves grave acts of baseness or depravity” to make it immoral.¹³⁸

130. *Id.* at 383.

131. *Id.*

132. *Id.*

133. *Id.*

134. Howell & Moore, *supra* note 125, at 21.

135. Geoffrey Ramsey, *Tracing the Roots of El Salvador’s Mara Salvatrucha*, InSight Crime (Aug. 31, 2012), <https://www.insightcrime.org/news/analysis/history-mara-salvatrucha-el-salvador/> [https://perma.cc/8S9F-XZP4].

136. Howell & Moore, *supra* note 125, at 14.

137. *See id.*; *see also* Wacquant *supra* note 136, at 383.

138. *Hernandez-Gonzalez v. Holder*, 778 F.3d 793, 802-03 (9th Cir. 2015).

CONCLUSION

The U.S. Courts of Appeals should review with utmost scrutiny the government's prosecution and deportation of overwhelmingly black and brown non-citizen gang members under the "crime involving moral turpitude" statute. The statute relies on a white supremacist fiction, repeated and repurposed by Congress and the Executive since slavery, that nonwhite Anglo Saxon races should be excluded from the United States because they are immoral. Indeed, the government's argument that immigrant gang activity is one such crime involving moral turpitude requires making those assumptions rooted in white supremacy, racist pseudoscience, and populist odium. Specifically, the government's argument that every immigrant gang member acts with the depraved state of mind necessary for a crime involving moral turpitude requires accepting as true the trope that all racial minorities are evil rascals or animals. Additionally, the government's argument that immigrant gang activity is morally reprehensible conduct accepts a global white-settler colonial version of history that improperly places fault on the displaced rather than the displacer.

EXHIBIT 45



ARTICLE

Deconstructing racial code words

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Abstract

Racism has become more covert in post-civil rights America. Yet, measures to combat it are hindered by inadequate general knowledge on what “colorblind” race talk says and does and what makes it effective. We deepen understanding of covert racism by investigating one type of discourse – racial code words, which are (1) indirect signifiers of racial or ethnic groups that contain (2) at least one positive or negative value judgment and (3) contextually implied or salient meanings. Through a thematic analysis of 734 racial code words from 97 scholarly texts, we develop an interpretive framework that explains their tropes, linguistic mechanisms and unique roles in perpetuating racism, drawing from race, linguistic and cultural studies. Racial code words promote tropes of White people’s respectability and privilege and Racial/Ethnic Minorities’ pathology and inferiority in efficient, adaptable, plausibly deniable and almost always racially stratifying ways, often through euphemism, metonymy and othering. They construct a “colorblind” discursivity and propel both “epistemic racism” (racism in knowledge) and systemic racism (racism in action). We further strengthen applications of Critical Race Theory in sociolegal studies of race by presenting a “racial meaning decoding tool” to assist legal and societal measures to detect coded racism.

Keywords: racial code words; covert racism; critical race theory; epistemic racism

Introduction

Racism has become more covert in post-civil rights America (Omi and Winant 2014; Bonilla-Silva 2022; Haney López 2014).¹ A few examples illustrate this trend. A city council denies rezoning to accommodate multifamily housing based on fears of *crime*. A nightclub owner instructs his bouncer to turn away anyone in *big chains*. A tech company rejects a minority applicant who *cannot fit our corporate culture*. Nowhere are specific references to race made. Yet, attributes like dress and cultural fitness can be seemingly race-neutral proxies or codes for members of specific racial groups (Carbado and Gulati 2013; Rich 2004). Similarly, concerns about crime may mask residents’ racially motivated fears about their future neighbors and convey a subtext that equates Racial/Ethnic Minorities² with poverty, pollution and criminality (Beckett 1997; Carlson 2020; Fleury-Steiner and Fleury-Steiner 2009; Gonzalez Van Cleve and

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Mayes 2015; Longazel 2012). Denying rezoning, employment or club entry based on these concerns may bar Racial/Ethnic Minorities from housing and labor markets and social networking. Practices that transmit racial narratives, like use of stereotypes, work together with practices that exclude racial groups from domains of social life, like markets and networks, to perpetuate racial hierarchy and inequality.

Although the Equal Protection Clause and civil rights laws (broadly termed antidiscrimination law) prohibit racially discriminatory practices, their operating logic is poorly equipped to address the deleterious effects of coded language (Rich 2004; Onwuachi-Willig and Barnes 2005; Haney López 2006; Carbado and Gulati 2013; Murakawa and Beckett; Obasogie 2010; Edelman et al. 2016). Contemporary race scholars have examined practices of covert racism in diverse settings and proposed various theories to better understand it (e.g., Bobo 2017; Bonilla-Silva 2022; Haney López 2003; Kinder and Sears 1981; Levinson and Smith 2012). However, comprehensive knowledge is lacking on what codes “colorblind” race talk deploys, how these codes propel racism in post-civil rights America and ultimately how to confront them in law and social practice. We help to fill this knowledge gap by focusing on one instrument of “colorblind” race talk: racial code words, which we define as (1) indirect signifiers of racial or ethnic groups that contain (2) at least one positive or negative value judgment and (3) contextually implied or salient meanings.

We create a novel corpus of 734 racial code words through a systematic literature review (Xiao and Watson 2019) of 97 scholarly texts that document race talk in post-civil rights America. We then conduct thematic analysis of these code words and develop an interpretive framework that explains their tropes, linguistic mechanisms and unique roles in perpetuating racism, drawing from race, linguistic and cultural studies. We find that racial code words promote tropes of White people’s respectability and privilege and Racial/Ethnic Minorities’ pathology and inferiority in efficient, adaptable, plausibly deniable and almost always racially stratifying ways, often through euphemism, metonymy and othering. Racial code words construct a “colorblind” discursivity and propel both epistemic racism (racism in knowledge) and systemic racism (racism in action). We narrow a disciplinary divide between sociolegal studies of race and Critical Race Theory (CRT) by integrating CRT insights with our findings into a “racial meaning decoding tool” to assist researchers, legal professionals and social justice advocates in detecting coded race talk. We conclude by highlighting the major contributions and notable limits of our study and reflecting on future research needed to help further deconstruct racial code words and update the right to nondiscrimination for a “colorblind” society.

Covert racism in law and social theory

The U.S. civil rights movement delegitimized blatant, biologically based, segregationist racism and ushered in new legislation and stronger application of constitutional equal protection to address racism. However, these victories were partial because the legal definition of racism fails to match the social reality of racism. Antidiscrimination law largely treats race as biologically derived, racism as rooted in individual bigotry and racial discrimination as based on immutable traits possessed by all group members (Carbado and Gulati 2013; Freeman 1990; Haney López 2006; Onwuachi-Willig and Barnes 2005; Rich 2004). Yet, race is socially constructed through ever-evolving

meaning systems, and racism results from diffuse, multiscalar and intersecting forces that organize American life in racially stratifying ways (Bonilla-Silva 2022; Haney López 2006; Lawrence 1987; Omi and Winant 2014). As a result, a chasm exists between race and racism operating on the ground and race and racism recognized by antidiscrimination law.

Racial/Ethnic Minorities (particularly Black people) experience the criminal justice system as an expansive, accumulating and mighty apparatus of oppression where law emboldens racism, legal professionals “do racism” as they “do justice,” and a “street law” is created for “street people” (Murakawa and Beckett 2010; Gonzalez Van Cleve 2016: 13, 53).³ Conversely, they experience antidiscrimination law as a narrow, disaggregating and weakened shield of protection that is more promissory than real (Murakawa and Beckett 2010). The “social regime of strict scrutiny” omnipresently surveils, disciplines and traps Black people in a liminal space of life and death and safety and punishment, while the legal regime of strict scrutiny narrowly constricts racially conscious remediation efforts and naturalizes and reinforces their racial subordination (Carbado 2022). Hence, although antidiscrimination law vows to eliminate racism, it takes a formalist and skin-deep approach to race, “aggressively disaggregates” systemic racism and racial causation and is “a jurisprudence of racial nonrecognition” rather than the supposed opposite (Murakawa and Beckett 2010; Obasogie 2010: 612; Edelman et al. 2016).

Law partakes and is a central site of the social construction of race (Haney López 2006). This jurisprudence of racial nonrecognition is in essence a special form of legal construction of race. Similar to how courts in past prerequisite cases constructed racial categories by determining who was and was not White (ibid), courts in racial discrimination cases construct racial boundaries by determining whether a justification is racial or not. In prerequisite cases, courts constructed race by drawing boundaries between races, with classification as White entailing legal protections and advantages. In antidiscrimination cases, courts construct race by drawing boundaries between racial and nonracial explanations, with classification as racial entailing (equal treatment) legal protections and advantages. In both settings, the law demarcates racial boundaries and creates a prized classification (Whiteness and raciality, respectively), courts narrowly guard eligibility for the prize, and plaintiffs are forced to simultaneously abide by and perpetuate the classification to receive legal protection.

Racial codes arise from the chasm between race and racism on the ground and in antidiscrimination law. They give the user “plausible deniability” of race-based decision making (i.e., the ability to deny that actions were racially motivated, Bilotta et al. 2019; Edelman et al. 2016; Liu and Mills 2006). Hence, redress for victims of coded racial discrimination depends on whether they succeed or fail to uncloak plausible deniability. If they succeed, courts recognize the accused act as illegal racial discrimination (e.g., *Dews v. Town of Sunnyvale, Texas*, 2000). If they fail, courts classify the accused act as nonracial and the code provides a legal hack for discrimination with impunity (e.g., *Hallmark Development Inc. v. Fulton County, Georgia*, 2006). Antidiscrimination law’s inability to crack racial codes is a major cause of their ascent.

Various theories illuminate how covert racism works. Covert racism spreads a narrative that American society is fair and justifies racial inequality on ostensibly non-racial grounds, such as White cultural/ideological values of individualism, meritocracy and free-market competition (e.g., “symbolic racism” in Kinder and Sears (1981);

“modern racism” in McConahay (1986); “laissez-faire racism” in Bobo (2017); “color-blind racism” in Bonilla-Silva (2022)). These values are so pervasive and hegemonic that they form part of commonsense knowledge about race and racial inequality, to the point of making racist beliefs and actions “automatic,” “unconsidered” and even “unconscious” (e.g., “unconscious racism” in Lawrence (1987); “commonsense racism” in Haney López (2003); “implicit bias” in Levinson and Smith (2012)). A smaller, though sizable, literature investigates mechanisms, processes and effects of covert racial discourses. Beckett (1997) exposes how political and media elites socially constructed the *war on crime* and the *war on drugs* in the latter 20th century to stoke racial anxieties and advance a conservative agenda. Mendelberg (2001), Haney López (2014) and Bennett and Walker (2018) show how strategic actors imbue race-neutral words like *fundamental rights*, *gun ownership*, *welfare*, *crime* and *criminal justice*, and *states’ rights* with racial meaning to seek political, economic and ideological gains. López-Espino (2023) exposes how legal professionals create covert discourses to racialize and coerce obedience from parents in child welfare cases through techniques of silencing, voicing figures of disbelief and labeling their speech as lies and excuses.

Despite these vibrant and growing studies of covert racism, comprehensive knowledge on tropes, mechanisms, evolving processes, and individual and systemic effects of covert racial discourses is lacking. Our research seeks to narrow this gap. We analyze one type of discourse – racial code words. We ask: What forms do contemporary racial code words take? What tropes do they convey? What functions do they perform and with what mechanisms? What knowledge, if any, can we gain about racial code words that could help researchers, legal professionals and social justice advocates detect coded race talk?

We also seek to narrow a disciplinary gap between sociolegal studies and CRT. On the one hand, we respond to sociolegal race scholars’ calls to study race capaciously, operationally and systemically (Gómez 2012; Murakawa and Beckett 2010). We investigate micro-instances of racial code word use and examine their tropes, individual and systemic effects, and linguistic mechanisms. On the other hand, we bring CRT to bear on sociolegal studies of race. The legal realist movement in the early 20th century and the law and society movement in the latter 20th century have made it a common and honored practice to apply social science insights to legal issues (Currie 1951; Macaulay 1963). In recent decades, in the context of race, the neutrality and necessity of applying social science insights to adjudication have been challenged from the left (CRT) and the right (legal formalists), respectively (Moran 2010). We deploy CRT insights to inform, energize and stimulate debate in sociolegal studies of race and racism, a practice explicitly advocated by former Law and Society Association President Laura Gómez (2012).

More concretely, we integrate CRT scholars’ insights as we search for ways to deconstruct the hack of racial code words. CRT scholars have long lamented how antidiscrimination law programmatically denies redress to victims of discrimination based on racially salient features such as housing patterns, hairstyles, names or accents and proposed innovative doctrinal solutions (Carbado and Gulati 2013; Lawrence 1987; Onwuachi-Willig and Barnes 2005; Rich 2004). Lawrence (1987) introduces a cultural meaning test for equal protection adjudication. The test asks courts to act “much like a cultural anthropologist” and investigate whether the government defendant’s conduct conveys “a symbolic message to which the culture

attaches racial significance” (ibid: 356). If the court determines that more likely than not “a significant portion of the population thinks of the governmental action in racial terms,” the court will assume that unconscious racism has influenced the decision-maker and thereby “apply heightened scrutiny” (ibid). Rich (2004) shows how race/ethnicity is embodied in various socially coded racial/ethnic markers and offers a racial/ethnic performativity test to better address modern forms of employment discrimination. Under this test, the plaintiff must establish that the performative act on which discrimination is based carries racial/ethnic significance and that the association between the act and the racial/ethnic identity is too strong to require the individual to change. The defendant then must offer a race-neutral value or justification and specifically explain how the plaintiff’s performance thwarts that value. Lastly, Onwuachi-Willig and Barnes (2005) propose a creative transplant of the “regarded as” verbiage in the Americans with Disabilities Act to employment discrimination law to address racial discrimination by proxy. If an employer uses a racial proxy (name, hairstyle, voice, etc.) to determine that a job applicant belongs to a certain race and denies the latter a job based on that determination, the employer has conducted illegal discrimination. Our study integrates these CRT insights into a “racial meaning decoding tool” to support researchers, legal professionals and social justice advocates in detecting racial code words in varied settings.

Canvassing racial code words from scholarly literature

Studying racial code words in empirical settings, particularly those relevant to antidiscrimination law, is essential to understanding and combating covert racism. Yet, such studies face immediate challenges. Researchers lack a framework informed by knowledge of the common features and functions of racial code words to determine whether words might be racially coded in a particular setting. Incomplete and inconsistent if not arbitrary findings may result in the absence of this foundation. Racial code words’ plausible deniability and political sensitivity may expose researchers to accusations of carelessness or subjectivity at best and stoking racial hatred or racism at worst.

A general framework of what racial code words are and how they function is needed to help researchers avoid these pitfalls. Ideally, such a framework would come from repeated empirical investigations into racial code words within and across diverse settings, like local housing or workplace decision making, court cases or police reports. However, this approach would be time- and resource-intensive. Such commitments would be imprudent absent some general knowledge on the forms and functions of racial code words, especially their harmfulness and intractability.

Our research provides this starting foundation by mining a corpus of racial code words from a rich but under-synthesized data source: existing cross-disciplinary scholarly literature on real-life race talk in post-civil rights America. We use a rigorous method of sampling, data extraction and analysis – a systematic literature review (Xiao and Watson 2019). This method draws findings from scholarly texts by identifying relevant texts through keyword searches, applying inclusion criteria to sample texts most able to answer the research questions, recording and validating data extracted from these texts through iterative review processes involving multiple researchers and drawing findings through qualitative methods of analysis, like thematic coding (ibid).

We used these methods to synthesize the rich, contemporary empirical scholarly literature on how people talk about race in diverse settings, canvass the code words used and develop an interpretive framework and later a decoding tool broadly applicable across social settings.

A key strength of studying racial code words through this data is that they have been vetted twice: first as race talk by the authors of the texts reviewed and second as racial code words by our research team. This quality helps to weaken their plausible deniability and counteract claims of researchers' subjectivity. The interdisciplinarity of this body of literature also helps to uncover common patterns of racial code words across diverse settings and build global insights on their forms and functions.

Studying racial code words from scholarly literature also has drawbacks. The data are filtered at least once and sometimes twice or more through others' interpretations. This limits the universe of race talk available for analysis within a particular setting. For example, researchers selectively extract instances of race talk from their participant interviews and integrate them into their findings. Instances from news media are filtered first through the perceptions of journalists and then through researchers who analyze the media. Selective filtering also reduces available contextual information on race talk, such as its setting or participant characteristics. This not only creates possibilities for interpretive errors but also limits insight into whether discourse is motivated by racial antipathy. Additionally, the settings studied in this data are shaped by authors' disciplinary orientations (e.g., political speeches for political scientists and schools for education scholars). Settings that are not strongly connected to a specific discipline are underrepresented (e.g., covert race talk at children's summer camps). These qualities of our data increase the risk that our findings fail to capture the broad use of racial code words in post-civil rights America and may misrepresent or misinterpret those that are captured.

Our sample of 734 racial code words comes from 97 texts published between 2000 and 2020 that address race and verbal language in real-life environments in post-civil rights America (see Appendix 1 for their references). These texts were drawn from a larger pool of 1,356 texts identified through a systematic keyword search using Google Scholar and our university library databases, which integrate large repositories, including HeinOnline, JSTOR, Web of Science, EBSCO, ProQuest and others. A text was included in the pool if (1) it had at least one keyword anywhere for each of the four dimensions of our research: race, communication, code and bias (see Appendix 2 for the keyword list) and (2) appeared in the first 200 results of our university library search engines (combining all of the keywords below in a Boolean string) or first 10 results in 190 iterations of searching in Google Scholar (due to limitations in combining keywords in a Boolean string), both sorted by relevance. This approach resulted in an initial sample that was broadly related to these dimensions but also had some blind spots (e.g., Gonzalez Van Cleve 2016; Nguyen et al. 2013; Tighe 2010). It captured texts that addressed race talk, even if their main topic was not explicitly about it.

We next identified texts most able to answer our research questions by retaining those that met the following criteria, which only 97 of the 1,356 texts met:

- (1) Published on or after January 1, 2000 in English in an academically recognized press/journal,
- (2) Used empirical data to answer questions about race or ethnicity and verbal language in real-world environments that were:

- In the United States,
 - After 1967 and
 - Not from fictional, simulated or other controlled experimental settings and
- (3) Contained racial code words identified:
- By the research team as:
 - Indirect signifiers of racial or ethnic groups that
 - Contain at least one positive or negative value judgment and
 - Contextually implied or salient meanings or
 - By the author(s) of the text.

Words were indirect signifiers of racial groups when they were embedded in discourse that was identified as race talk by the author(s) of the text or our research team but did not explicitly name the referred to racial or ethnic group in the sentence in which they appeared. They contained at least one positive or negative value judgment when the words, sentence or discourse in which they were embedded expressed positive or negative valence or affect (see Mohammad 2018). The meanings were contextually implied or salient when the speaker and the audience within a particular setting shared an understanding of the words during the exchange. An example is a White woman's recounting of conversations with neighbors in a mixed-race Chicago neighborhood who told her to "Be careful when you go down that street' and, where there was, you know, sort of a seemingly *rougher clientele* living on certain streets ...' (Burke 2017: 289–290). We identified *rougher clientele* as a racial code word, because it (1) was an indirect signifier of Black people (as suggested by the author and indicated by the lack of explicit reference to Black people in the discourse), (2) contained a negative value judgment (*rougher* has negative valence) and (3) was understood as such by the speaker and the listener in a conversation about safety in a particular Chicago neighborhood.

Evaluating whether texts contained racial code words was challenging. Meanings of words (especially coded words) are context-dependent and fluid (Hall 2013). They are constructed through not only convention but also dynamic, ongoing interactions between people with different identities and societal positionalities. The socially constructed nature of race additionally dictates that racial meanings are contested and even embattled (Omi and Winant 2014). For example, although we interpreted a bouncer's instruction to turn away anyone in *big chains* as coded language for Black people, someone with a different positionality (e.g., a White teenager who wears big chains to "look cool") may reach a different conclusion. These challenges manifested in our research, as our two-person research team carries internal differences in racial, disciplinary and linguistic positioning.

We took several measures to address interpretive challenges. First, we independently extracted code words from a pool of 30 texts selected from our initial sample, discussed and resolved discrepancies and enhanced our inclusion criteria. Then, we sorted the initial sample by author last names, divided it between us alphabetically and independently extracted potential code words fitting the inclusion criteria. We recorded them in a database along with the following contextual elements: the (1) lines of text encompassing the code word, (2) temporal and geographic setting, (3) motivating event and (4) characteristics of the referred-to subject, user and audience, including racial identity if available. We then independently evaluated each other's

data, discussed and resolved discrepancies and iteratively revised our criteria and reevaluated the code words until no further changes were made. This resulted in a final sample of 734 code words from an initially extracted pool of 1,197 code words, testimony once again to difficulties in discerning racial meaning.

We explicitly embrace the malleability and contestability of racial meaning in our decoding tool, which we present in a later section. We follow a practice in CRT of treating words as racially coded when community norms or a plurality of parties – in our case, our research team and often the authors of the examined scholarship – believe that race is being signaled (Lawrence 1987; Rich 2004). Our approach also is informed by the logic of dealing with contested or otherwise uncertain facts in the law, such as hearing from opposing sides and making findings based on a preponderance of evidence.

Henceforth, the code words extracted from scholarly texts are italicized and referred to as the “sample”; their citations are denoted by “S” (i.e., sample) and a number representing the order in which their references appear in Appendix 1 (e.g., S2). Virtually all of the racial code words came from data referenced in the texts; they most often appeared in quotes from the data (e.g., from interview participants or news media, as indicated by the use of singular quotation marks) but in some instances they appeared in an author’s synthesis of observations from their data (e.g., a list of racial code words commonly used in a political campaign, as indicated by the use of double quotation marks). We found only a few instances of an author using racially coded language to interpret their data or build an argument, mostly to convey personal experiences or illustrate common examples of coded racism (e.g., S76; S89; S66).

Table 1 shows the sampled code words’ temporal, racial and contextual dimensions. Most appeared between the 40-year span of 1968–2008 and the 8-year span of the Obama Presidencies (36% and 35%, respectively). Code words for Black people were most prevalent (45%), followed by White (25%) and Latinx (11%) people. A sizable proportion referred to people from other racial and ethnic groups (henceforth called “Other people”). A small number of these referred to Middle Eastern, Asian, Native American or Jewish people ($n = 34, 18, 3, 3$, respectively); most referred to Mixed Race people or Racial/Ethnic Minorities in general. The user and audience were most often White people when race was known (56% and 31% of code words, respectively), but often the race of the user was unknown (e.g., a police officer) or the race of the audience was irrelevant, because it was the public in general (e.g., American voters). The sampled code words occurred across a range of settings but mostly in the media, politics or research; only a small portion occurred in settings with some potential for antidiscrimination protection (e.g., schools, workplaces, marketplaces and law enforcement).

We used thematic analysis to discover and record the sampled code words’ explicit and implicit qualities in a codebook (Gaber 2020). Our approach was abductive, meaning it was informed by categories and theories from existing scholarship and new divergent ones found through systematic and iterative data engagement (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). Tropes from covert racism and sociolegal studies were foundational, including perceptions of Racial/Ethnic Minorities’ criminality, deviance from American cultural values like individualism and White possessiveness of American property, economy, governance and citizenship (e.g., Beckett 1997; Bonilla-Silva 2022; Carlson 2020; Moreton-Robinson 2015). We discovered their nuances and

Table 1. Characteristics of sampled code words (*n* = 734)

Characteristic	%	Characteristic	%
<i>Period</i>		<i>Subject of code word</i>	
Pre-Obama (<2008)	36	Black people	45
Obama (2008–2015)	35	White people	25
Trump (2016–2020)	15	Latinx people	11
Multiple periods	8	Other people	28
Unknown	6		
<i>User</i>		<i>Audience</i>	
White people	56	White people	31
Black people	11	Black people	9
Latinx people	2	Latinx people	8
Other people	7	Other people	4
Unknown	28	General public	40
		Unknown	25
<i>Settings with little potential for antidiscrimination protection</i>	83	<i>Settings with some potential for antidiscrimination protection</i>	18
Research	28	Schools	5
Politics	27	Workplaces	2
Media	23	Marketplaces	3
Traditional	17	Housing	0
Social	6	Law enforcement	8
Other	6		

Source: Authors' own work.
Notes: Code words' subjects, users and audiences may be of multiple racial groups. Other race refers to Asian, Native American, Middle Eastern, Mixed Race, Jewish or Racial/Ethnic Minorities in general. Code words in a few cases have multiple settings.

identified additional categories, like White people's tactics of responding to perceived threats, by iteratively reviewing the data through the lens of theories of covert racism and sociolegal studies (e.g., Beckett 1997; Carlson 2020; Haney López 2014). Finally, we stratified the code words based on their racial subjects and examined trends in their forms and functions, drawing from linguistic, cultural and race theory.

We tell a laboriously researched story about contemporary racial code words. The data are drawn from empirical studies in sociology, communication, education, law and political science and settings as diverse as politics, media, law enforcement, schools and workplaces (see Appendix 1). Our research approach was careful and conservative; the racial code words in our corpus have been twice vetted as race talk, as

previously noted. The disciplinary and situational range of our data and the rigor of our methods enables us to identify common ways that racial code words are functioning across settings and offer a new interpretive framework and decoding tool to assist investigations in particular settings.

Nonetheless, the story we tell is imperfect. In addition to the limitations outlined above, we do not bolster the originally sampled texts with texts from their references and citations or conduct parallel data collection by multiple researchers due to the initial sample's large size and our team's limited capacity. Taken together, these issues leave some bias unresolved. The racial code words in our sample do not represent the full range of coded racial speech in post-1968 America. There almost certainly are gaps in the forms, tropes and functions of code words revealed by those sampled. The lack of contextual information for some code words, the fluid and contested nature of racial meaning, and our positionality may have led us to misinterpret racial signaling and meaning in some cases. Deconstructing racial code words will take time. Our research offers starting resources, ones that are rigorously grounded in prior literature, existing norms and careful coding but intended to be discussed, verified and refined.

Reverse engineering racial code words in contemporary America

This section disassembles the machinery of the sampled racial code words. We reveal how they integrate tropes that create narratives about racial/ethnic groups with linguistic mechanisms that offer efficient, adaptable and plausibly deniable communication, often to racially stratifying ends.

Forms and tropes

Figure 1 shows the range and relative frequencies of sampled code words for White, Black, Latinx and Other people. The format of the words conveys frequency, with bolded black words appearing ten times or more in our sample, unbolded black words appearing two to nine times and gray words appearing only once. Font size conveys frequency but also code word length, with shorter ones also appearing larger. Parentheticals show the variation of similar code words, including singular and plural versions and qualifications. For example, *America*, *American*, *Americans* and *most Americans* are shown as *(most) America(n(s))*. Brackets capture contextually understood but unstated elements, like '*no people walking around with their pants [down]*' (S56: 562).

America and *American*, *suburb* and *suburbanite*, and *law and order*⁴ were the most frequent code words for White people; *diversity* was the most common for Black, Latinx and Other people. *Welfare* and *thug* also commonly referred to Black people; *illegal* commonly referred to Latinx people and *fobby* and *terrorist* commonly referred to Asian and Middle Eastern people, respectively. Most code words appeared only once, indicating a rich mosaic of contemporary coded race talk. Notably, none of the code words for White people appeared 10 times or more (bolded black), while multiple code words for Black and Latinx people had this quality. This may indicate that stereotypes for White people are more nuanced and individualized than those for Black or Latinx people.⁵ A few of the code words are racial and ethnic slurs ("*towel head*," '*banana*,' '*twinkie*,' '*Coconut*,' '*Uncle Tom*,' '*nappy-headed hos*' and '*Dindu Nuffins*') (S79: 1818; S81: 118; S40: 234; S25: 8; S16: 160); others have explicitly racist elements ('*camel-riding*,'

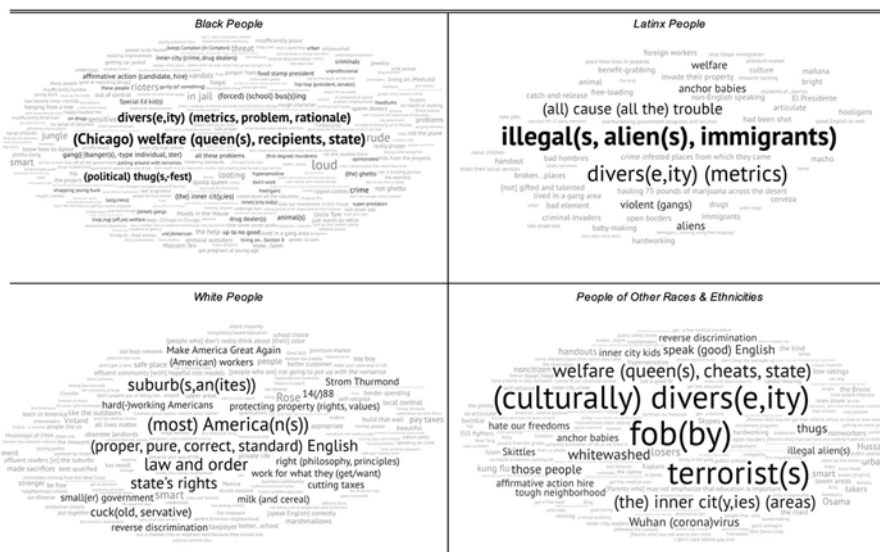


Figure 1. Forms of code words by the race of their subjects ($n = 734$). *Source:* Authors' own work.

Notes: Code words' formatting reveals their frequencies. Those in bolded black appeared at least ten times; those in unbolded black appeared between two and nine times and those in gray appeared once. Font size is mostly a function of frequency, with more common code words appearing larger, but also of length, with shorter code words also appearing larger. People of Other Races & Ethnicities refers to Asian, Native American, Middle Eastern, Mixed Race, Jewish or Racial/Ethnic Minorities in general.

'jungle,' 'eat dog,' 'strapping young buck' and 'young buck') (S52: 33; S23: 288; S82: 195; S65: 59; S14: 707) (Wikipedia Contributors [n.d](#); Wiktionary [n.d](#)). These have been fully or partly decoded over their lifecycle, a theme we revisit later.

Code words for White people and Whiteness

Sampled code words for White people were mostly expressed by White people to other White people or the public at large. They convey beliefs about White people's respectability and privilege and their possession of American lifeways see [Table 2](#). The "White Respectability and Privilege" trope conveys that White people are deserving of their high position in the American social structure, because they create community affluence and fulfill their economic and civic duties (Mills 1951; Urciuoli 1994). One example is a White man referring to the segregation of White people and Racial/Ethnic Minorities in local schools as 'they didn't want the sort of *lower areas* to assimilate with the *upper areas*' (S18: 109). Here, '*upper areas*' and '*lower areas*' refer to where White people and Racial/Ethnic Minorities lived, respectively. Code words expressing the affluence of White communities often ground it in suburban single-family homeownership, such as when newspaper managers justified redirecting their investment away from their traditional central city circulation areas as merely trying to serve "*affluent readers [in] the suburbs*" (S97: 27). Those about White people's economic citizenship reference their knack for generating and consuming goods and services, as well as their perceived higher human capital. This is evident in a Chicago computer software employer's view that 'you do not *talk street talk* to the *buying public*,'

Table 2. Tropes of sampled code words for White people and Whiteness

Trope	Main narrative	Sub-narratives	Example code words	Example decoding
White Respectability and Privilege	Whites are deserving of their high position in the American social structure, because they create community affluence and fulfill their economic and civic duties.	(1) Community affluence: The affluence of White communities is grounded in suburban single-family homeownership. (2) Economic duties: White people have (a) a knack for generating and consuming goods and services and (b) higher human capital. (3) Civic duties: White people follow laws and pay taxes, which create safer and better resourced communities.	'they didn't want the sort of lower areas to assimilate with the upper areas' (S18:109)	upper areas: Where White people live lower areas: Where Racial/Ethnic Minorities live
White Possessiveness	America belongs to White people, as opposed to America belonging also to Racial/Ethnic Minorities or White people belonging to America. Being American requires being from or adopting what is considered White male European Protestant culture – values like individualism; property acquisition, control and extraction; advancement through merit and being hardworking and calm.	(1) Citizenship: White male European Protestant culture is equated with American citizenship. (2) Governance: White male European Protestant culture is the basis for American governance. (3) Nostalgia: Longing for a time when White male European Protestant culture dominated American society, to the detriment of Racial/Ethnic Minorities and other marginalized groups.	'Make America Great Again' (S49: 211; S39: 36)	America: White people Make ... Great Again: Revert to time when White male European Protestant culture dominated American society
White Defense	Racial/Ethnic Minorities pose threats to White people's respectability, privilege or possession of American lifeways. These conditions are maintained through "colorblind" governance that weakens Racial/Ethnic Minorities' societal power and success.	(1) Resentment: Resentment of policies perceived to benefit Racial/Ethnic Minorities, implying a need for action but not directly calling for it (2) Response: Calls for a response to modify or eliminate policies perceived to benefit Racial/Ethnic Minorities to benefit White people.	'competency based education' (S30: 223–224)	competency based education: Advantage White people by ending affirmative action

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued.)

Trope	Main narrative	Sub-narratives	Example code words	Example decoding
Passing	Racial/Ethnic Minorities are succeeding or not to various degrees in adopting White male European Protestant cultural traits.	(1) Acting White: Racial/Ethnic Minorities are succeeding or not in temporarily adopting White male European Protestant cultural traits. (2) Becoming White: Racial/Ethnic Minorities are succeeding or not in permanently adopting White male European Protestant cultural traits.	'While my family eats jollibee for breakfast I'm over here having Starbucks #whitewashed' (S75: 515)	eats jollibee: Becoming a Filipino person having Starbucks: Becoming a White person whitewashed: Becoming assimilated into White culture

Sources: Authors' own work. Tropes adapted from Mills (1951); Urciuoli (1994); Moreton-Robinson (2015); Dudas (2005); Haney López (2014); Anderson (2016) and Drakulich et al. (2021).
Note: See Appendix 1 for the example code word sources.

where the employees who ‘*talk street talk*’ are Black and Latinx people and the ‘*buying public*’ is White people (S46: 298–299). Code words about White people’s stronger perceived civic citizenship address their tendency to follow laws and pay taxes, which create safer and better resourced communities. This language is present in a Ku Klux Klan recruitment flier distributed to ‘[l]aw abiding citizens’ in the Houston area (S88: 53).

Another category is “White Possessiveness,” which expresses that America belongs to White people, as opposed to America belonging also to Racial/Ethnic Minorities or White people belonging to America (Moreton-Robinson 2015). Being American requires being from or adopting what is considered White male European Protestant culture – values like individualism; property acquisition, control and extraction; advancement through merit and being hardworking and calm. The subcategory Citizenship equates this culture with American citizenship. Journalist Bill O’Reilly expressed this in comparing the ‘non-tradition ... constituency’ of ‘single-women, Hispanic Americans, African Americans, whatever’ that reelected Obama in 2012 and the ‘[t]raditional American voters’ that didn’t (S57: 153–154). The subcategory Governance identifies this culture as the basis for American governance, such as when Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott told the Council of Conservative Citizens (a right-wing, pro-White people political group): ‘The people in this room stand for the *right principles* and the *right philosophy*’ (S21: 54). Nostalgia conveys longing for a time when this culture dominated American society, to the detriment of Racial/Ethnic Minorities and other marginalized groups, a sentiment often expressed by President Trump and his supporters in calls to ‘*Make America Great Again*’ (S49: 211; S39: 36).

Many code words link to Whiteness but do not exclusively refer to White people. Some reflect a trope that we call “White Defense,” borrowing from historical and sociolegal studies of White people’s responses to civil rights actions (e.g., Anderson 2016; Drakulich et al. 2021; Dudas 2005; Haney López 2014). These mostly convey White people’s reaction to supposed threats posed by Racial/Ethnic Minorities to their respectability, privilege or possession of American lifeways. They refer to subjects of all races, though they most commonly refer to White people, followed by Latinx and Black people. Government policies that sought to foster racial equality or that were racialized to defend racial power asymmetries, like busing during the Nixon election and the war on terror during the George W. Bush and Obama administrations, often were subjects. Some convey White people’s resentment of policies perceived to benefit Racial/Ethnic Minorities, implying a need for action but not directly calling for it. For example, one author expresses her resentment of law schools’ use of affirmative action to admit Black people by arguing that it “flatters their own egos, so that [law schools] can gaze upon their ‘*diverse*’ realm and bask in their noblesse oblige” (S66: 59). Others call for a response to modify or eliminate these policies to benefit White people, such as some politicians’ and journalists’ advocacy for ‘*competency based education*’ as a strategy to advantage White people by ending affirmative action (S30: 223–224). These code words reflect desires to maintain White respectability, privilege and possession of America through “colorblind” governance that weakens Racial/Ethnic Minorities’ societal power and success.

Other code words link to Whiteness but refer to Racial/Ethnic Minorities. These reflect the trope of “Passing,” namely perceptions of Black, Latinx, Asian or Middle Eastern people succeeding or not to various degrees in adopting what is recognized as White male European Protestant cultural traits (Urciuoli 1994). They are relatively

rare in our sample and were variously spoken by White people and Racial/Ethnic Minorities. One subcategory is “Acting White,” such as when an Iranian American man debated whether to ‘*wear a baseball cap*’ representing an American sports team to the airport to emphasize the Whiteness of his racially ambiguous appearance and avoid being perceived as a ‘*terrorist*’ (i.e., a Middle Eastern person) (S67: 120). Another is “Becoming White,” such as a Filipino Twitter user’s deployment of the hashtag ‘*white-washed*’ to make a self-deprecating joke about being assimilated into White culture, because she is ‘*having Starbucks*’ when her family ‘*eats jollibee*’ (a fast-food restaurant serving Filipino cuisine) (S75: 515).

Code words for racial/ethnic minorities

Sampled code words referring to Racial/Ethnic Minorities, like those for White people, were often expressed by White people to other White people or to the public at large. They mostly convey that Racial/Ethnic Minorities cause indirect, direct or possible future harm to White people and to society more broadly (see Table 3). This is especially evident in the “Parasite,” “Contagion” and “Villain” categories. These well-studied tropes evolved from stereotypes for immigrants (particularly Chinese) in the latter 19th century and Black people in the slavery and post-Reconstruction eras; subsequently, they fueled cultural and economic opposition to civil rights, welfare programs and (particularly Latinx) immigration and justified the expansion of the carceral state and oppression of Racial/Ethnic Minorities and immigrants (e.g., Anderson 2016; Beckett 1997; Beckett and Ming Francis 2020; Carlson 2020; Dvorak 2000; Gold 2012; Haney López 2014; Lens 2009; Russell-Brown 1998; Santa Ana 2002; Santa Ana et al. 1998; Shabazz 2015).

Sampled code words expressing Parasite convey that Racial/Ethnic Minorities exploit communities, institutions, services, amenities or other aspects of the U.S. social system. They close to equally refer to Black, Latinx and Other people. Most present Racial/Ethnic Minorities as “Takers not Makers,” as exploitative recipients of and not contributors to social welfare programs who have deep personal and cultural deficiencies within economic spheres. The most pervasive example of Taking is ‘*welfare queen*,’ which Presidential Candidate Ronald Reagan famously used to refer to Black women living extravagantly on public benefits (S65: 58). Another is a news commentator defending the War on Drugs (which disproportionately criminalized Black people) by describing those targeted as ‘*living on welfare, food stamps, Medicaid, and Section 8*’; the commentator goes on to use Not Making code words by arguing that their communities ‘*don’t promote a strong work ethic* because most ... *don’t work themselves*’ (S84: 258). A small portion presents Racial/Ethnic Minorities as “Cheaters,” conveying their perceived exploitation of job markets and higher education through biased hiring, promotion and admissions processes (e.g., calling a Person of Color in the workplace an ‘*affirmative action hire*’ (S76: 113)). Closely related to Parasite is the category “Deficiency,” which expresses anxieties that Racial/Ethnic Minorities (particularly low-income and working-class children and their parents) lack personal traits necessary to contribute to the economy, which may eventually threaten White people and society when they become a Parasite (Valles 2021; López-Espino 2023). High school teachers referring to Racial/Ethnic Minority students as ‘*at-risk kids*’ is an example (S80: 124–125). Parasite and Deficiency code words echo Gonzalez Van Cleve (2016)’s observation of “mope” – a lazy, incompetent degenerate who drains

Table 3. Tropes of sampled code words for racial/ethnic minorities

Trope	Main narrative	Sub-narratives	Example code words	Example decoding
Parasite	Racial/Ethnic Minorities exploit communities, institutions, services, amenities or other aspects of the U.S. social system.	(1) Takers not Makers: Racial/Ethnic Minorities are exploitative recipients of and not contributors to social welfare programs who have deep personal and cultural deficiencies within economic spheres. (2) Cheaters: Racial/Ethnic Minorities exploit job markets and higher education through biased hiring, promotion and admissions processes.	'welfare queen' (S65: 58)	welfare queen: Black woman living extravagantly on public benefits
Deficiency	Racial/Ethnic Minorities lack personal traits necessary to contribute to the economy, which may eventually threaten White people and society when they become a Parasite (see above).	N/A	'at-risk kids' (S80: 124–125)	at-risk: Racial/Ethnic Minority person
Contagion	Racial/Ethnic Minorities spread something harmful within communities, institutions or other societal domains. Agents of harm include attitudes, values, behaviors and conditions.	(1) Invasion: Racial/Ethnic Minorities physically invade White and potentially other communities. (2) Corruption: Racial/Ethnic Minorities corrupt White and potentially other communities through conditions associated with Racial/Ethnic Minorities.	'The [Local] High School kids, they're good kids. However, when they come in and out, the bad element hides and mixes in between with them.' (S23: 289)	bad element: Black and Latinx people
Villain	Racial/Ethnic Minorities cause direct harm to White people and potentially others by threatening personal safety or private property.	(1) Suspect: Racial/Ethnic Minorities are suspected of engaging in crime based on their comportment, place of residence or behaviors. (2) Offender: Racial/Ethnic Minorities commit violent or property crimes against White people.	'Shut up, terrorist' (S67: 85)	terrorist: A Middle Eastern person

Sources: Authors' own work. Tropes adapted from Bonilla-Silva (2022); Gold (2012); Anderson (2020); Carlson (2020); Santa Ana (1998; 2002); Valles (2021); Gonzalez Van Cleve (2016); Flores et al. (2019); Fleury-Steiner et al. (2009); Longazel (2012) and Gonzalez Van Cleve and Mayes (2015).

Note: See Appendix 1 for the example code word sources.

societal resources – as a racially coded term that prosecutors, judges and defense attorneys construct to describe poor Black and Latinx defendants charged with nonviolent crimes and frame them as undeserving of legal protection (ibid: 57–61, 69).

Contagion expresses that Racial/Ethnic Minorities spread something harmful within communities, institutions or other societal domains. Agents of harm include attitudes, values, behaviors and conditions. These most refer to Latinx people in our sample – echoing Santa Ana’s studies of public discourse about Latinx people in 1990s California (Santa Ana 2002; Santa Ana et al. 1998), followed by Black and Other people. Like Parasite, Contagion code words exist within socioeconomic spheres of life, but the object of harm is geographic: (1) the physical “Invasion” of White and potentially other racial and ethnic communities by Racial/Ethnic Minorities and (2) the “Corruption” of these communities by conditions associated with Racial/Ethnic Minorities. Invasion code words often use deixis like “these” or “those” to differentiate outsiders from insiders, such as White neighbors referring to Black people on their block as ‘*these people*’ in expressing safety concerns (S23: 290). *Illegal* and variants were common Invasion code words for Latinx people. An example is the Tea Party rally sign ‘Freeloading *Illegals* are Raping U.S. Taxpayers,’ which derives additional potency from its integration of Parasite (‘*Freeloading*’) and White Respectability and Privilege (‘*Taxpayers*’) code words (and seeds the trope of Villain (described below) in ‘*Raping*’) (S65: 152). An example of a Corruption code word is referring to Black and Latinx students attending a White neighborhood high school as the ‘*bad element*’ (S23: 289). Contagion code words often reflect users’ “legal-spatial consciousness” of how race shapes rights to occupy and behave in space, their attention to transgressions of these norms and their role in reinforcing them (Flores et al. 2019; Shabazz 2015).

Villain expresses that Racial/Ethnic Minorities cause direct harm to White people and potentially others by threatening personal safety or private property. These sampled code words most refer to Black people, followed by Middle Eastern and Latinx people. They commonly convey fear that Racial/Ethnic Minorities will commit crimes against White people. The subcategory “Suspect” expresses concern about Racial/Ethnic Minorities engaging in crime based on their comportment, place of residence or behaviors, such as when a juror in a bank robbery case observed about the Latinx defendant, ‘I guess we’re profiling but they *cause all the trouble*’ (S3: 1135). The subcategory “Offender” addresses perceptions that Racial/Ethnic Minorities commit violent or property crimes against White people. One example is politicians and journalists calling Black people protesting the death of a young Black man in police custody ‘*thugs*’ (S26: 350). Another is a White high school student telling a Middle Eastern peer, ‘Shut up, *terrorist*’ (S67: 85). Like Contagion, Villain implies a moral-legal cartography that creates “new forms of knowledge of space, self, and other” and calls for White defense and harsher criminalization of minorities, particularly Black and Latinx people (Fleury-Steiner and Fleury-Steiner 2009: 6; Longazel 2012; Gonzalez Van Cleve and Mayes 2015; Shabazz 2015).

Functions

Most of the sampled racial code words have racist effects. Some perpetuate common-sense racism and contribute to a “racial episteme” (a total system of knowledge and knowing about race) that portrays White people and communities as respectable and

duly privileged and Racial/Ethnic Minorities and their communities as pathological and duly inferior.⁶ Others contribute to systemic racism by supplying the substantive justifications for policies and practices that perpetuate racial inequality. The linguistic mechanisms of euphemism, metonymy and othering enable code words to imbue racial meaning and perpetuate these forms of racism by giving users varying degrees of efficient, adaptable and plausibly deniable race talk (see Table 4). Some evolve, assisted by a technique we call compounding.

From covert race talk to racist effects

Santa Ana observes that discourse “antecedes society” and “speaks society into existence” by creating categories, conceptual mappings, worldviews and institutions (2002: 317). Our findings affirm his insight. Most of the sampled code words intentionally or unintentionally contributed to racist effects. Many perpetuated commonsense racism by promoting White people’s respectability or Racial/Ethnic Minorities’ pathology (Haney López 2003; Obasogie 2010). Examples include high school teachers and administrators referring to Black students as ‘*Special Ed kids*,’ a journalist referring to a White murder victim as an ‘*upstanding citizen*,’ and Newt Gingrich referring to Black people as those who have ‘*no habit of showing up on Monday*’ (S80: 182–183; S44: 11; S57: 102). These examples, and the eight common tropes that our sample of racial code words conveys, show how racial code words contribute to epistemic racism – routine and automatic discursive practices that link Racial/Ethnic Minorities (and other minoritized groups like women and people from the Global South) with inferior characteristics like unintelligence, animality and irrationality and link White people (mostly “Western” White men) with superior qualities like higher intelligence, civility and rationality (Beagan et al. 2024; Bhimull et al. 2022; Grosfoguel 2010; 2013; Kubota 2020). Although racial code words in our sample rarely rely on metaphors for creation, the narratives they tell about Racial/Ethnic Minorities are mostly metaphors: Parasite, Contagion and Villain.⁷ These vivid, rich and familiar metaphors perform powerful “conceptualizing and signaling functions” (Santa Ana 2002: 59), enabling the production of a racial episteme that portrays White people and their spaces as superior and Racial/Ethnic Minorities and their spaces as inferior. These findings indicate that racial code words have become building blocks of a “colorblind” epistemic racism in post-civil rights America.

Other racial code words were used to endorse a policy or practice that perpetuated racial inequality and White privilege. These speakers were frequently a White person advocating for a supposedly pro-White policy or practice or opposing a supposedly pro-Racial/Ethnic Minorities policy or practice. The most common was harsher policing and penalization of Racial/Ethnic Minorities, particularly Black people. Examples include a neighbor advocating for increased policing to stop ‘*hooligans*’ and a gun rights group calling for ‘*responsible gun ownership*’ to intimidate Black people – kinds of discourse that Carlson (2020) labels “gun militarism” and “gun populism,” respectively (S23: 289; S14: 701). Use of racial code words to support harsher penalization of Racial/Ethnic Minorities affirms existing studies on how mainstream discourse on crime perpetuates racial power and control by creating state apparatuses that, instead of governing crime, govern through crime (Fleury-Steiner and Fleury-Steiner 2009;

Table 4. Mechanisms of sampled code words

Mechanism	Qualities	Effects	Subcategories	Example code words	Example decoding
Euphemism	Use of agreeable, milder or inoffensive language to refer to something disagreeable, harsher or potentially offensive about a racial group or its members.	Makes conversation polite by downplaying racial dimensions and protects from charges of racism. Relieves speakers from experiencing personal stress and adverse social consequences that might stem from naming race.	(1) Understatement: Use of fuzzy language to lighten a serious topic. (2) Under-specification: Use of general language to refer to something more specific. (3) Overstatement: Use of upbeat exaggerations to highlight something desirable about the referent.	'Apple products are for the premium market' (S85: 28)	premium market: people who are not Black people
Metonymy	Use of a contextually understood closely associated feature of a racial group to refer to the group or its members. Has two parts: the descriptor (a racially salient feature) and the described (a member; the entirety or another feature of a racial group). The descriptor-described may be part-whole, whole-part or part-part. The relationship linking the descriptor and the described may be physical or conceptual.	Achieves plausible deniability through racial proxies. Reduces the informational, emotional and reputational costs of communication. Relieves speakers from experiencing personal stress and adverse social consequences that might stem from naming race.	(1) Racializing the Location: Use of a closely associated geography to refer to a racial group. (2) Inflating the Social Member or Subgroup: Use of a notable member or closely associated subgroup to refer to a racial group.	'no Timberlands at the door' (S47: 135)	Timberlands: a Black man

(Continued)

Table 4. (Continued.)

Mechanism	Qualities	Effects	Subcategories	Example code words	Example decoding
Othering	Use of disagreeable, harsh or potentially offensive language to forge racial difference.	Creates a qualitative difference and ideological distance between two racial groups, placing them on the opposing sides of a contextually salient binary of us vs. them. Reduces the informational, emotional and reputational costs of communication. Weakens plausible deniability.	(1) Total and insurmountable: Involves dehumanization. (2) Moral: Relates to morality. (3) Legal: Relates to legal status. (4) Cultural: Relates to cultural traits. (5) Interpersonal: Involves microaggressions.	'anchor babies' (S22: 35)	anchor babies: Latinx people

Sources: Authors' own work. Mechanisms adapted from Cameron (2012); Crespo-Fernández (2018); Rich (2004); Onwuachi-Willig and Barnes (2005); Carbado and Gulati (2013); Shabazz (2015); Littlemore (2015); Plumwood (1993); Pandey (2004); Hall (2013) and Lens (2009).

Note: See Appendix I for the example code word sources.

Gonzalez Van Cleve and Mayes 2015; Murakawa and Beckett 2010; Simon 2007). Other common policy-positions included:

- (1) Delegitimizing or sabotaging policies, initiatives or individuals that sought to empower minorities. For example, conservative critic Craig Smith referred to Barack Obama as a *'hip-hop president'* (S4: 138).
- (2) Opposing welfare programs. For example, White politicians referred to welfare recipients as *'welfare queen[s]'*, *'people on food stamps'* and *'people who are on crack'* (S35: 2125; S72: 1164; S57: 60).
- (3) Opposing affirmative action programs. For example, White research participants highlighted that affirmative action beneficiaries *'don't keep the averages up'* and are *'destined to fail'* (S13: 19; S52: 30).
- (4) Advocating stricter immigration policy. For example, Republican politicians argued that *'bad hombres'* and *'illegal aliens'* stem from "open borders" (S35: 2125; S9: 131).

Most private practices involved race-based exclusion, such as from a bar, shopping mall, neighborhood, newspaper, job, intimate relationship or educational or medical resource, such as school children avoiding a *'terrorist'* peer (S67: 85).

Notably, many code words both perpetuated commonsense racism and supported a racist policy or practice. This shows how covert racism and institutional racism are mutually constituted and reinforced (e.g., Gonzalez Van Cleve and Mayes 2015; Murakawa and Beckett 2010). Code words that perpetuate commonsense racism sustain a racist cultural/epistemic ecology, supplying the substantive justifications for policies and practices that perpetuate racial inequality. In turn, these policies and practices produce appearances of White people's respectability and privilege and Racial/Ethnic Minorities' pathology and inferiority, thus justifying commonsense and epistemic racism (see also Haney López 2006; Lawrence 1987). Like overt race talk, racial code words direct attention away from racist systems and structures and toward the racial difference of the disadvantaged subject (Gonzalez et al. 2022, citing Fields and Fields). However, more convenient than overt race talk, racial code words cloak the co-dependent cultural and systemic racism with plausible deniability and racial innocence and open a new space for cultural/epistemic and systemic racism to co-evolve in a "colorblind" society (Bonilla-Silva 2022; Omi and Winant 2014).

Euphemism, metonymy and othering: mechanisms for efficient, adaptable and plausibly deniable race talk

Linguistic mechanisms are instrumental to overt and covert racial discourses (e.g., metaphor in Santa Ana 2002; "metapragmatic dismissals" in López-Espino 2023). Santa Ana (2002, 1998) analyzes how use of metaphors such as "immigration as dangerous waters," "immigrant as animal," "affirmative action as disease" and "nonEnglish language as barrier" shaped public discourses on immigration, affirmative action and bilingual education and contributed to the passing of anti-Latinx referenda on these issues in 1990s California. We found that metaphors were used mostly to explicitly

racialize a subject in our research and hence were not codes, with a few exceptions, such as referring to Latinx immigrants as ‘*anchor babies*’ (e.g., S22: 35; S57: 42; S14: 712).

Speakers in our sample of racial code words commonly used euphemism, metonymy and othering to covertly racialize a subject and, in turn, perpetuate epistemic and/or systemic racism. Euphemism is the use of agreeable, milder or inoffensive language to refer to something disagreeable, harsher or potentially offensive about a racial group or its members (Cameron 2012). An example is a master’s student using ‘*not diverse*’ to refer to the harsher fact that Racial/Ethnic Minorities are absent from her classes (S8: 165). Euphemist code words in our sample exhibit three, often overlapping forms: understatement, under-specification and overstatement (Crespo-Fernández 2018). Understatements use fuzzy language to lighten a serious topic, such as an online news commentator using ‘*old boys network*’ to refer to practices of hiring only White men (S53: 197). Under-specifications use general language to refer to something more specific, like an online news commentator using ‘*certain group of people*’ to refer to Black male athletes perceived to have “foul mouths” at a local mall (S64: 245). Overstatements use upbeat exaggerations to highlight something desirable about the referent, such as an Apple supervisor reminding his employee that ‘Apple products are for the *premium market*’ (i.e., not Black people) when asked whether “African American English” should be incorporated into Siri speech recognition software (S85: 28).

Euphemism makes conversation polite by downplaying racial dimensions and protects from charges of racism. For example, a Southern politician criticized the growing struggle for racial justice in America with a remark that had the rest of the country voted for Strom Thurmond (a presidential candidate who campaigned on racial segregation) like his state did, ‘we wouldn’t have had *all these problems* over all these years’ (S48: 203). This latter scenario also exhibits “dog whistle racism,” where politicians knowingly convey racial meaning while denying race talk (Bennett and Walker 2018; Haney López 2014). Other examples include calls for ‘*law and order*’ and ‘*states’ rights*’ and to ‘*Make America Great Again*’ in the Nixon, Reagan and Trump Presidential Campaigns and Presidencies, respectively (S14: 690; S59: 72; S39: 36).

Metonymic racial code words refer to a racial group or its members using a contextually understood closely associated feature (Littlemore 2015; Radden and Kövecses 1999). They have two parts: the descriptor (a racially salient feature) and the described (a member, the entirety or another feature of a racial group). The descriptor-described may be part-whole, whole-part or part-part. Timberland, a shoe brand, is a part that represents the whole of a Black man in a bar’s rule of ‘no *Timberlands* at the door’ (S47: 135). People, a word for society as a whole, represents the part of White people in a White woman’s observation that ‘*people*’ get mad at ‘*people of other races*’ for competing for jobs (S47: 158). Bussing, a part of school racial desegregation, represents another part – Black students going to White schools – in Nixon’s rhetoric against the practice during his presidential campaign (S87: 124). The relationship linking the descriptor and the described may be physical (e.g., police officers referring to a Muslim peer as “*towel head*”) or conceptual (e.g., high school teachers referring to White students as ‘*Gifted and Talented*’) (S79: 1818; S80: 124–125). CRT scholars have analyzed various types of coded racism through metonymy, such as discrimination by proxy (Onwuachi-Willig and Barnes 2005; Rich 2004) and intra-racial discrimination directed against a racial subgroup sharing a common feature, e.g., unassimilated Black people (Carbado and Gulati 2013).

The variants Racializing the Location and Inflating the Social Member or Subgroup metonymy were common in our sample. Racializing the Location metonymy refers to a racial group through a closely associated geography. Sampled code words for Black people and White people most frequently convey this. Examples include generalized geographies like ‘inner city’ and ‘urban’ (racialized as Black) and ‘suburban’ (racialized as White) and specific geographies like “Chicago,” “Compton,” “Detroit” and ‘the Bronx’ (racialized as Black) and ‘the West Coast’ (racialized as White) (e.g., S65: 214; S78: 480; S8: 165; S76: 96; S97: 27; S80: 128; S61: 182). Others include a healthcare case worker’s reference to their Black and other Racial/Ethnic Minority clientele as ‘the inner city kids that we deal with’ and a White fraternity mocking Black History Month by hosting a gathering called ‘Compton Cookout’ (S37: 477; S90: 63). The utility of Racializing the Location metonymy stems from enduring imagined and real spatial racial segregation in America, through housing types (e.g., the ‘projects’ racialized as Black), city sections (e.g., ‘South Side’ racialized as Black), entire cities (e.g., ‘West Sierra Linda’ racialized as Racial/Ethnic Minorities in general) and regions (e.g., ‘rural’ racialized as White) (S38: 115; S41: 97-98; S15: 21; S85: 22; Shabazz 2015).

Inflating the Social Member or Subgroup metonymy refers to a racial group using a notable member or a subgroup. Notable members in our sample include real persons (e.g., ‘Osama’ racialized as Middle Eastern and ‘Jefferson Davis’ racialized as White), stereotypes of real persons (e.g., ‘welfare queen’ racialized as Black), archetypical fictional individuals (e.g., ‘Uncle Tom’ as a Black person who betrays other Black people to curry favor with White people) and generic fictional individuals (e.g., ‘Alice Tang’ racialized as Asian, ‘Tyrone Jackson’ racialized as Black and ‘Joe’ racialized as White) (e.g., S67: 81; S57: 41; S35: 2125; S40: 234; S85: 10; S28: 62). Subgroups often convey racial stereotypes. For instance, a White woman moving into a racially “mixed neighborhood” received advice to stick to streets with ‘university or professional looking people,’ a code word conveying respectable White people in the neighborhood (S23: 290). Other examples are ‘people on food stamps’ (racialized as Black and conveying Parasitism) and “terrorists” (racialized as Middle Eastern and conveying Villainy) (S72: 1164; S65: 36).

Metonymies facilitate race talk not only by achieving plausible deniability through racial proxies but also by reducing the informational, emotional and reputational costs of communication. They pare a “large amount of information” down into a simplified “manageable form,” enabling speakers to use this skeletal form to access the complex concept (Littlemore 2015: 4–5). For example, wearing ‘big chains’ congeals the perceived pathologies of a young Black man: criminality, irresponsibility, poverty and hypersexuality (S47: 135). Like euphemism, they also relieve speakers from experiencing personal stress and adverse social consequences, like cancellation, that might stem from naming race.

Otherring, like metonymy, also contributes to efficient race talk (Santa Ana 2002; Santa Ana et al. 1998). It creates a qualitative difference and ideological distance between two racial groups, placing them on the opposing sides of a contextually salient binary of us vs. them (Hall 2013; Lens 2009; Pandey 2004; Plumwood 1993). Otherring contrasts sharply with euphemism by explicitly using disagreeable, harsh or potentially offensive language to forge racial difference. Stereotyping is an important tool of othering. It ignores the internal differences among the otherized group, makes them “appear suitably homogeneous” and creates categorical differences that place

them in a position of inferiority, which “ground[s] hierarchy” (Plumwood 1993: 53–55). Otherizing differences in our sample include:

- (1) Total and insurmountable. Black and Latinx people were dehumanized through words such as ‘*animal*’ and ‘*demon*’ (S89: 237; S40: 56).
- (2) Moral. Some politicians portrayed Latinx people as foreigners who took advantage of America’s social services through producing ‘*anchor babies*’ (S22: 35).
- (3) Legal. Latinx and Asian people’s citizenship and belonging were questioned through words such as ‘*illegals*’ and ‘*fobby*’, respectively (S97: 118; S75: 519).
- (4) Cultural. ‘*eat dog*’ was racialized as an Asian practice, and “*towel head*” was a racial proxy for Middle Eastern men (S82: 195; S79: 1818).
- (5) Interpersonal. ‘*rude*,’ ‘*angry*,’ ‘*loud*’ and ‘*opinionated*’ were microaggressions against Black people (S47: 81; S76: 205, 109).

These examples reveal that othering is frequently deployed to target Latinx immigrants, a phenomenon also noted by Santa Ana (2002, 1998). While euphemism cloaks race and value judgments in nicer-sounding substitutes, othering amplifies value judgment but avoids direct connections to race. Othering weakens plausible deniability, which makes decoding easier. Yet, it is commonly used despite this risk because, like metaphor and metonymy, it is fundamental to how we think, communicate and form a cultural community. Cultural formation and order depend on sensemaking through differentiation and categorization and marking boundaries against intruding or impure symbolisms (Hall 2013).

Othering often was present among sampled code words that contributed to racist effects, which reveals its potency as a discursive craft of racism (Gonzalez et al. 2022; Hall 2013; Pandey 2004). An example is Tea Party activists’ conception of society as made up of ‘*workers*’ and ‘*nonworkers*,’ ‘*productive citizens*’ and ‘*the freeloaders*,’ which creates a binary of socioeconomic virtue and vice to oppose poverty assistance programs and perpetuate commonsense racism (S1: 14). When stereotype infuses with law, othering is amplified. For example, a Tea Party-backed candidate claimed that ‘*waves of illegal aliens* [stream] across our border, joining violent gangs, forcing families to live in fear’ (S9: 131). Here, ‘*illegal aliens*’ conveys legal and moral difference; the law’s making and marking of human beings as citizens, legal immigrants and illegal aliens and the trope of Villain cross fertilize to produce powerful racist effects (Gonzalez Van Cleve 2016; Longazel 2012).

Compounding: a catalyst in the lifecycle of racial code words

Racial code words are birthed through the marriage of tropes and linguistic mechanisms like those described above, which enable users to realize complex meaning in an efficient, adaptable and plausibly deniable way. Yet their codedness may wax and wane, with some becoming decoded and transitioning to explicit race talk and others becoming coded and decoded again.

Heavily scrutinized racial code words sit at a crossroads. One path is to become recoded through the discursive practice we call compounding. This technique capitalizes on the syntactic versatility of language by enabling users to stack multiple code words together, graft one code word to a racially neutral expression or remix parts of code words into a new expression to create a new code word. Stacking enables

users to efficiently communicate richer or more precise racial meaning, such as a business leader referring to White areas as ‘*suburbs in the more affluent communities [that have] college-going culture and much more academically rich environment*’ in explaining reasons for enduring social inequality in education (S15: 18–19). Stacking also allows users to recode language decoded in public and academic discourse, like *terrorist* and *street gangs* becoming ‘*domestic terrorist street gangs*’ in a news article commentator advocating for the continuation of the war on drugs (S84: 257). Grafting and remixing enable users to create new code words to racialize new phenomena, like ‘*political thug*,’ ‘*food stamp president*’ and ‘*gangster government*,’ which evolved after the election of President Obama, the first Black President (S26: 351; S14: 707; S57: 48–49). Similarly, a White House staff member’s remixing of ‘*kung flu*’ cleverly implicates Chinese people in the spread of the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, which first broke out in China (S50: 654). Compounding responds to the inherently unstable qualities of coded race talk, a dynamic that sociolegal scholars also attribute to “rights talk” (Dudas 2005).

Another path is for the racial code word gradually to become more exposed as explicitly racist. Haney López (2014) traces the political life of code words like *bussing*, *law and order* and *welfare queen* by showing how their racial meanings become uncloaked by scholars, media and others through their overuse by politicians and pundits during election cycles and political administrations. It is at this stage that the race talk might become fully decoded and enter the lexicon of explicitly racial words (e.g., *towel head*).

The birth and death of individual racial code words do not affect the continuous construction of the racial episteme, because these individual building blocks are perfectly dispensable and replaceable. Like in metaphors, what makes the building block effective is not the particular string of words used, but the conceptual linkages that the words invoke (Santa Ana 2002: 30). Other strings of words can invoke the same linkages. Hence, while individual racial code words are dispensable, racial code words as building material are inherently regenerative and indestructible. They are “[s]mall acts of cunning,” endowed with diffused power, subtle arrangements and apparent innocence, and must be subject to profound suspicion (Foucault 1995: 139).

Detecting the codes: a racial meaning decoding tool

We now present a “racial meaning decoding tool” to assist researchers, legal professionals and social justice advocates in detecting coded race talk. The tool integrates our empirical insights – that racial code words deploy tropes and linguistic mechanisms to convey racially stratifying narratives in efficient, adaptable and plausibly deniable ways, often to racially stratifying effects – with a synthesis of CRT insights discussed earlier from Lawrence (1987), Rich (2004) and Onwuachi-Willig and Barnes (2005). The tool can assist in evaluating whether words suspected to fit our definition of racial code words – indirect signifiers of racial or ethnic groups that contain at least one positive or negative value judgment and contextually implied or salient meanings (see our explanation in “Canvassing Racial Code Words from Scholarly Literature”) – are potentially racially coded and used for disequalizing purposes. Application involves conducting three analyses and scoring the words in question based on their outcomes.

Table 5. The racial meaning decoding tool

Step	Purpose	Task	Scoring
Thematic analysis	Evaluates whether the words might have racial meaning.	Determine whether any of the common tropes of racial code words are present (see Tables 2 and 3).	1: At least one trope is present 0: No tropes are present, or the presence of tropes is uncertain or debated
Effect analysis	Evaluates whether the words might lead to a disequalizing effect on racial power relations.	Determine whether the words might contribute to: 1) Commonsense racism by promoting White people's superiority or Racial/Ethnic Minorities' inferiority. 2) A policy or practice that perpetuates racial inequality and White privilege. 3) Another racially disequalizing effect.	1: At least one of these outcomes is possible 0: None of these outcomes are possible, or the possibility of these outcomes is uncertain or debated
Linguistic analysis	Evaluates whether the words might have qualities that help to obscure or efficiently convey racial meaning.	Determine whether any of the common mechanisms of racial code words are present (see Table 4).	1: At least one mechanism is present 0: No mechanisms are present, or the presence of mechanisms is uncertain or debated
Decision	Evaluates the probability of the words exhibiting racial coding and being used for disequalizing purposes.	Tally the scores for the thematic, effect and linguistic analyses.	0–1: Words are likely not racially coded and used for disequalizing purposes 2–3: Words are potentially racially coded and used for disequalizing purposes

Sources: Authors' own work. Steps adapted from Lawrence (1987); Rich (2004) and Onwuachi-Willig and Barnes (2005).

Note: The tool should be applied to words suspected to be indirect signifiers of racial or ethnic groups that contain at least one positive or negative value judgment and contextually implied or salient meanings.

Higher scores imply a higher probability of racial coding and use for disequalizing purposes (see [Table 5](#)).

The first step is *thematic analysis*. This involves assessing whether the words might have racial meaning by determining whether at least one of the eight common tropes of racial code words shown in [Tables 2](#) and [3](#) is present. The second step is *effect analysis*. This requires evaluating whether the use of the words could lead to a disequalizing effect on racial power relations. Examples of disequalizing effects include (1) commonsense racism by promoting White people's respectability or Racial/Ethnic Minorities' pathology, (2) a policy or practice that perpetuates racial inequality and White privilege and (3) other disequalizing effects. The third step is *linguistic analysis*.

This involves assessing whether the words might have qualities that help to obscure or efficiently convey racial meaning by discerning whether at least one of the three common mechanisms of racial code words shown in Table 4 is present. Words receive a score of 1 for each analysis passed and 0 for each analysis not passed or with unclear outcomes. The final step is to tally the scores of the three analyses. Words scoring between two to three are potentially racially coded and used for disequalizing purposes, while those scoring zero or one are likely not.

Taking two additional steps can help to strengthen the rigor of the tool's application. First, the user should try to apply shared societal understandings of the words in question, particularly those from the speaker's and audience's communities (Rich 2004). Integrating local contextual data can help to clarify shared understandings. For instance, demographic data showing disproportionate tendencies of particular racial and ethnic groups to have particular conditions can help illuminate the use of metonymy (e.g., data on differences in geographic location for Racializing the Location metonymy or housing tenure for Inflating the Social Member or Subgroup metonymy). Second, ideally at least two people should conduct the analyses and cross-validate their outcomes. Scores of 1 should be given only when their outcomes agree; scores of 0 should be given when their outcomes are unclear or disagree.

We illustrate the utility of the tool through two examples of words reflecting grounds for opposition to allowing for denser housing development in Arizona (Eland 2022; Rosequist 2022). In the first example, a resident of a predominately White and single-family home suburb opposes updating a plan to allow for denser mixed-use development, because they '*didn't move here to be in an urban city*.'

Thematic analysis: The region's racially segregated housing patterns (higher concentration of Racial/Ethnic Minorities and denser housing in the central city and higher concentration of White people and single-family housing in the suburbs) establish a plausible link between race and geography, with the city imagined as Minority and the suburb imagined as White. In this context, the resident's invocation of *urban city* plausibly reflects a Contagion theme that the planning change would bring Racial/Ethnic Minorities (and presumed negative consequences) to the suburb. Scoring = 1.

Effect analysis: The ground for opposition is expected to hinder Racial/Ethnic Minorities from living in the suburb, given that they are disproportionately likely to live in denser, multifamily housing in the region. Scoring = 1.

Linguistic analysis: The geographic and racial correlations shown in the thematic analysis reveal that the speaker may be using the linguistic mechanism of metonymy, referring to Racial/Ethnic Minorities by a closely associated geography (*urban city*). Scoring = 1.

Decision: Total score = 3. The ground for opposition is potentially racially coded and used for disequalizing purposes.

In the second example, residents of a predominately White small town of large lot homes oppose a denser and mixed-use modular housing project targeted to mining workers because it will increase the '*transient*' population.

Thematic analysis: Most workers employed in occupations related to mining in the region identify as White. The ground for opposition reflects none of the common tropes about White people. However, a sizable minority of these workers identify as Racial/Ethnic Minorities. The ground for opposition may reflect the trope of Contagion if it references miners who are Racial/Ethnic Minorities, since the residents perceive

that transient workers may bring harm to the town. Overall, the presence of tropes is uncertain. Scoring = 0.

Effect analysis: It is uncertain whether excluding mining workers from a predominantly White town would have a racially disequalizing effect, since it is likely that the mining workers who would live in the proposed housing would be mostly White people. Scoring = 0.

Linguistic analysis: Transiency is a characteristic of miners; thus, metonymy is present. Scoring = 1.

Decision: Total score = 1. The ground for opposition is likely not racially coded and used for disequalizing purposes.

A strength of the tool is that it is designed to deal with the uncertainty and contestability of coded language. It evaluates the possibility of racial coding by investigating multiple dimensions of the words in question and placing them on a spectrum. The deniability of racial meaning is less plausible for words placed higher on the spectrum (i.e., with scores closer to 3) and vice versa for those placed lower (i.e., with scores closer to 0).

The tool has academic as well as practical utility. Researchers can use it to study coded race talk in particular social settings and verify, challenge and refine it for these settings. The tool also encourages legal professionals and social justice advocates to continue inquiry into race-based discrimination claims where antidiscrimination law has so far left off and to update the right to nondiscrimination for a “colorblind” society. In antidiscrimination lawsuits/investigations, legal and other advocates can apply the tool to scrutinize clients’ encounters with suspicious words or proffered justifications and analyze whether they encoded plausible racial meaning in their particular context and were used to produce racially disequalizing effects.

Applying the tool will be challenging and risky. Discerning racial coding is a delicate and fraught process. People’s positionalities influence how they perceive meaning, as previously noted. Racial coding can take myriad forms and no words are indispensable to conveying a racial message. If one word is decoded, others can take its place. Racial code words can adapt to changed circumstances and be invented spontaneously by drawing on potential cues that appear in a discourse. If evidence to support a particular decoding falls short of being incontrovertible, researchers are vulnerable to accusations of being racist (Haney López 2014). Sharing Lawrence’s assessment about his cultural meaning test, the tool “will be beset by the complexities and inadequacies of social interpretation and buffeted by the head winds of political resistance” (1987: 388). While deconstructing the edifice of coded racism one building block at a time is slow and laborious, each of the numerous, diffuse, local and quotidian settings of racial discourse is a potential site of discursive and power remaking. Similar to Santa Ana’s call to invent “insurgent metaphors” (2002), to the extent an ever-evolving and regenerative reservoir of racial codes is perpetuating racial domination, society should build a counter-reservoir and systemically, programmatically and ceaselessly uncloak the codes to equalize racial power. Our tool is a first effort in this direction.

Building knowledge to further deconstruct racial code words

Despite claims by the Supreme Court and others that colorblindness is equal treatment and that race-based remediation efforts are a form of racial discrimination

(*Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* 2023; Dershowitz 2021), racism and racial stratification continue in post-civil rights America, partly under the guise of colorblindness (Bonilla-Silva 2022; Powell 2023). Coded language is an instrument of this “colorblind racism.” Through a thematic analysis of 734 racial code words from 97 scholarly texts, this research introduced a new interpretive framework and decoding tool to inform and stimulate future investigations of racially coded language.

We identified eight common tropes of racial code words, four for White people and Whiteness and four for Racial/Ethnic Minorities. Tropes for White people and Whiteness (White Respectability and Privilege, White Possessiveness, White Defense and Passing) convey that White people (1) are respectable and duly privileged and have exclusive possession of America and (2) must conduct self-defense against threats from Racial/Ethnic Minorities, who in turn must strive to assimilate to White norms and values. Tropes for Racial/Ethnic Minorities (Parasite, Deficiency, Contagion and Villain) convey that they are socially, economically, morally and developmentally deficient people who cause indirect, direct or possible future harm to White people and communities and society more broadly. Through these tropes, racial code words fuel commonsense racism and a racial episteme that portrays White people and their spaces as superior and Racial/Ethnic Minorities and their spaces as inferior. They also contribute to systemic racism by supplying the substantive justifications for policies and practices that perpetuate racial inequality. These policies and practices, in turn, produce appearances of White people’s superiority and Racial/Ethnic Minorities’ inferiority, thus justifying commonsense racism (Haney López 2006; Lawrence 1987).

Certain linguistic mechanisms enable racial code words to perpetuate both episodic and systemic racism. Euphemism and metonymy obscure the racial nature of the discourse, creating a “colorblind discursivity.” The ensuing plausible deniability helps to neutralize, normalize and legitimize an otherwise troubled discourse of knowledge production (Foucault 1990). This enables speakers to engage in disavowal, “a strategy by means of which a powerful fascination or desire is both *indulged* and at the same time *denied*” (Hall 2013: 257). Mechanisms like metonymy and othering also decrease the costs of racial communication by reducing complex meanings into a succinct code. Metonymy allows speakers to use a low information-cost concept to access high information-cost concepts. Othering further lowers these costs by reducing the complexity, fluidity and temporality of a person or a group to a few objectified traits (ibid: 247). As a code word gets exposed, or repeated use unravels its congealed meaning, or a new circumstance demands a new code, compounding allows speakers to creatively reconfigure racial code words to convey new and evolving racial meanings. Techniques of syntactic stacking, grafting or remixing re-fix an unraveling meaning (e.g., *inner city crime*) or reinvent meaning for new purposes (e.g., *political thug*), fueling their evolution (Dudas 2005). The creation of racial codes from tropes, the acceptance of codes as commonsense, the unraveling or delegitimization of coded meanings and the eventual destruction and recreation of codes form the life cycles of racial code words.

Our research informs and extends empirical studies of racially coded language. Theoretically, we narrow a disciplinary gap between sociolegal studies of race and CRT. Our interpretive framework reflects sociolegal scholars’ calls to study race and racism

as processes in social systems (Gómez 2012; Murakawa and Beckett 2010) by showing how use of racial code words in micro-instances constructs race and perpetuates epistemic and systemic racism in society. Our decoding tool integrates insights of CRT scholars (Lawrence 1987; Rich 2004; Onwuachi-Willig and Barnes 2005) with our findings to assist researchers, legal professionals and social justice advocates in examining multiple dimensions of suspected words and placing them on a scored spectrum of possible coding. Practically, our tool can aid legal professionals and social justice advocates in confronting covert racism and unclocking its various disguises, as recent retrenchments in civil rights by the Supreme Court and some state legislatures and courts exemplify the current battles over meaning and authority of interpretation.

We stress that our framework and tool are only the first steps in a long journey of developing more rigorous methods to detect racial code words, discern their mechanisms and understand how they contribute to epistemic and systemic racism. Discerning meaning from language – particularly indirect, contextually dependent and plausibly deniable language like racial code words – is difficult. This task is made harder in our research by our use of secondary data from scholarly literature, data that has been filtered at least once and sometimes twice or more by others' perceptions. This quality leads to an iterative loss of contextual information valuable in studying race talk and increases the risk of misrepresenting and misinterpreting it. Our data also are biased by practical challenges encountered in comprehensively capturing and conveying racial code words in a large sample of scholarly literature. Our research is a necessary but incomplete attempt at muddling through these challenges to offer preliminary insights on a topic as timely and harmful as racial code words.

Our larger aim is for our framework and decoding tool to spark more research in sociolegal studies on how racial code words facilitate unequal power relations through epistemic and systemic racism. First, research is needed on how racially coded speech in distinct contexts shapes specific policies and practices, and how these in turn entrench racial power hierarchies and complicate remediation efforts. Researchers can use our tool to help discern which words might be racially coded in particular settings, such as legal education, jury deliberations, police officer testimony and local government decision making, and help refine the tool's use for these settings. More case studies of racial code words in particular places, like Gonzalez Van Cleve (2016)'s investigation of Chicago area criminal courts, would help to not only understand their racially stratifying functions but also conceptualize how they vary across different geographic, demographic, situational and discursive contexts. There also is an opportunity to uncover how these contexts relate to one another thematically and temporally within places (e.g., how code words are reinforced, complemented or contradicted among traditional and social media and public meeting contexts). Research on the ecologies and modes of functioning of racial codes in settings regulated by antidiscrimination law especially is warranted, as our sample features only a small number of code words in these settings.

Second, research into racial code words' life cycles and continuums of harm is needed. Why do some retain their coding while others become decoded? Racial code words may have thresholds of efficacy; as they are widely adopted, their effectiveness may first grow but later shrink due to increased exposure and scrutiny. Why are some more effective in achieving racist outcomes than others? Discursive practices

like othering may play a role. Code words that exhibit total and insurmountable forms of othering and thematic dimensions of Villain are most harmful, while those that convey thematic dimensions of Passing are less harmful, though there is harm in how they function to codify White normality and erase racial and ethnic differences. Why do some persist after decoding while others perish or evolve? While racial meanings and codes change over time, some may change faster than others, including in particular social contexts and historical periods. There is opportunity to marry historical, sociological and discourse analysis in building continuums of harm and tracing pathways of codedness in various settings, particularly those relevant to antidiscrimination law. Despite its limitations, antidiscrimination law can be a more powerful tool for positive social change if we invest in developing, applying and refining methods to expose racial codes and their functions in the reproduction of racism and racial stratification.

Supplementary material. The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.1017/lr.2024.19>.

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Notes

1. We define post-civil rights America as starting in 1968, the year that the last race-related civil rights law, the Fair Housing Act, was passed.
2. We follow Rouse (2021)'s suggestion to articulate how racial descriptors work. We capitalize terms referring to racial groups to emphasize how race is socially constructed through discourse. We use Racial/Ethnic Minorities to refer to both People of Color and Jewish people, given the increasing anti-Semitism in recent years and the ambivalence of some Jewish people regarding their positionality in the White-Color dichotomy. Further, this was a better term than BIPOC to refer to people who identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Color, since our data offers little insight into Indigenous peoples' experiences (see Table 2).
3. A similar dynamic exists in child welfare cases. See López-Espino 2023.
4. The referred-to subject of policy-oriented racial code words is the racial group that the speaker assumes is the beneficiary. For example, *law and order* is a code word for White people even though it mostly targets Black people, because they are the perceived beneficiaries.
5. We owe this insight to an anonymous reviewer of the manuscript. Another possibility is that scholars have focused more on studying stereotypes for Black and Latinx people than White people. This latter possibility is not convincing, because the sample features more than twice as many code words for White people (25%) than for Latinx people (11%).
6. Although "cultural racism," "commonsense racism" and "epistemic racism" are distinct concepts, we use them interchangeably, since they focus on cultural meanings and epistemic roots of racism.
7. Interestingly, tropes about White people in our sample are more literal than metaphoric. We are not sure how to explain this difference. One possibility is that participants in the racial episteme assume that White people are normal, human and moral, and metaphors are an effective tool to conceptualize Racial/Ethnic Minorities as deviant, non- or sub-human and immoral.

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328 Deirdre Pfeiffer and Xiaoqian Hu

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EXHIBIT 46



News Tren de Aragua

Is Venezuela's Tren de Aragua 'Invading' the US?

by Venezuela Investigative Unit 1 Apr 2024



Venezuela's Tren de Aragua gang is causing increasing concern in the United States, even though the group appears to have no substantial US presence and looks unlikely to establish one.

US federal lawmakers recently asked President Joe Biden to declare Tren de Aragua a transnational criminal organization, calling the group "an invading criminal army" and claiming the gang's members have spread "brutality and chaos" in the United States.

"It is clear that most state and local law enforcement agencies are not yet prepared to handle the magnitude of this grave threat," the group of nearly two dozen lawmakers, all from the opposition Republican Party, wrote in a [March 14 letter](#).

SEE ALSO: [Tren de Aragua: From Prison Gang to Transnational Criminal Enterprise](#)

The request follows a smattering of reports in recent months suggesting the possible presence of Tren de Aragua members in the United States, some with links to isolated crimes.

But the few crimes attributed to alleged Tren de Aragua members in the United States appear to have no connection with the larger group or its leadership in Venezuela. And none of more than a dozen national, state, and local law enforcement agencies contacted by InSight Crime has reported any significant presence of Tren de Aragua.

Flimsy Ties

Two recent murders with tenuous links to Tren de Aragua attracted Manage consent read media attention and featured prominently in the Republican

Related Content



Tren de Aragua, Venezuela's Most Dangerous Gang, Spotted in Chile

21 Oct 2021



Venezuela's Tren de Aragua Gang Muscling into Colombia Border Area

10 Jul 2019



Two recent murders with tenuous links to Tren de Aragua attracted widespread media attention and featured prominently in the Republican lawmakers' letter, though neither killing had any apparent connection to gang activities.

The most recent was the February 2024 murder of Laken Riley, a university student in the southeastern state of Georgia. Federal prosecutors said in a [court filing](#) that the alleged killer had tattoos, wore clothes, and flashed hand signs that suggested an affiliation with Tren de Aragua, though they did not suggest gang ties motivated the murder. But tattoos are not an identification symbol for Tren de Aragua members, as they are for groups such as the [MS13](#) and [Barrio 18](#).

A search of the powerful CourtLink legal database found no other US criminal cases mentioning Tren de Aragua, either at the state or federal level.

The head of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation's gang task force, Ken Howard, told InSight Crime that relatively little is known about the gang's presence and activities in the United States.

"We know they're here in the state of Georgia," Howard said. "But as far as building out an intelligence database on the group that's well documented and identified, I wouldn't say we're there yet."

Previously, Tren de Aragua was linked to the November 2023 murder of a Venezuelan ex-police officer near Miami. But Detective Alvaro Zabaleta of the Miami-Dade Police Department told InSight Crime that the suspect in that case had denied belonging to the gang, and investigators had found no evidence indicating his membership.

"This individual has knowledge of members of this organization ... But that's all they have," Zabaleta said. "We don't have any crimes that we can say are associated to them."

The Republican lawmakers' letter accused Tren de Aragua of "rapes of multiple children." But InSight Crime could not find any reports of such incidents in the United States, and the main authors of the letter, Sen. Marco Rubio and Rep. María Elvira Salazar, both of Florida, did not respond to requests for comment.

Police agencies in major urban areas across the United States – including Los Angeles, Phoenix, Dallas, San Antonio, and Denver – told InSight Crime that they had no reports of crimes committed by Tren de Aragua in their jurisdictions.

The New York Police Department has told local media outlets that Tren de Aragua is responsible for a series of cell phone robberies in New York City, but the agency did not respond to InSight Crime's requests for comment.

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Venezuela's Tren de Aragua Gang Seeks to Grow Inside Brazil Prisons

26 Sep 2019

The New York Police Department has told local media outlets that Tren de Aragua is responsible for a series of cell phone robberies in New York City, but the agency did not respond to InSight Crime's requests for comment.

Vague Reports

Information about the presence of Tren de Aragua in the United States is limited and vague.

In August 2023, US Border Patrol Chief Jason Owens said on X, formerly Twitter, that his agency had arrested a Tren de Aragua member attempting to enter the United States. A few months later, in November, the Border Patrol [told CNN en Español](#) that the agency had arrested 38 possible Tren de Aragua members between October 2022 and October 2023.

US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) recently announced what appears to be the first apprehension of an alleged Tren de Aragua member away from the border. The arrest happened near Chicago on March 11, 2024 – days before the lawmakers' letter to Biden – though ICE did not announce it publicly until March 25.

It is not clear how ICE verified the suspect's membership in the gang. The Border Patrol, ICE, and their parent agency, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) did not respond to InSight Crime's requests for comment.

A special agent of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation recently [told the New York Post](#) that Tren de Aragua members are entering the United States and potentially teaming up with other gangs like the MS13.

But a spokesperson for the FBI's parent agency, the US Department of Justice, told InSight Crime the agency does not have “any public cases involving Tren de Aragua to provide to you.” The FBI declined InSight Crime's requests for comment.

Barriers to Entry

Tren de Aragua has successfully expanded beyond Venezuela to establish operations in other South American countries by following and preying off the huge migrant flows generated in recent years by Venezuela's economic and political struggles. But the gang is unlikely to be able to replicate its model in the United States, despite the country's large Venezuelan diaspora communities.

Tren de Aragua lacks control over US migrant smuggling and human trafficking routes. Control of such routes was key to [the gang's expansion](#) in South America. Tren de Aragua's smuggling operations helped build a strong presence in border areas of Colombia and Chile, giving it a base from which to branch out to other crimes with low barriers to entry. From there, the gang expanded to urban areas and prisons in those countries.

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trafficking routes. Control of such routes was key to the gang's expansion in South America. Tren de Aragua's smuggling operations helped build a strong presence in border areas of Colombia and Chile, giving it a base from which to branch out to other crimes with low barriers to entry. From there, the gang further expanded to urban areas and prisons in those countries.

SEE ALSO: [High-Profile Chile Murder Shows Tren de Aragua's Sophistication](#)

But human smuggling and trafficking routes along the US-Mexico border are [dominated by Mexican groups](#), leaving little room for Tren de Aragua to establish a foothold.

Similarly, Tren de Aragua would likely struggle to break into other criminal markets in the United States, many of which are controlled by well established gangs. The lack of criminal competitors was decisive in Tren de Aragua's ability to expand into Chile, whereas it has had less success in Ecuador's more competitive criminal landscape.

While Tren de Aragua appears unlikely to make substantial inroads in the United States, inflating the threat posed by the gang could encourage imposters. This phenomenon has occurred in countries [throughout Latin America](#) as the gang's reputation has grown.

Zabaleta, the Miami-Dade detective, said his agency is wary of stoking unnecessary fear about the group.

"It gives them notoriety, it gives them credibility, it makes them grow," he said. "You start to create that panic and that noise on something that perhaps is not even there."

Featured Image: Image from a Fox News broadcast showing a map of the alleged migration of Tren de Aragua to the United States. Credit: Fox News

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News Tren de Aragua

What We Know About Tren de Aragua's US Presence

by Venezuela Investigative Unit 4 Oct 2024



Tren de Aragua's supposed expansion into the United States has received national media coverage and attention from the country's most prominent politicians, fueling questions about the extent of the group's presence and activities.

The criminal group took advantage of the large-scale migration of Venezuelans across South America to evolve from a prison gang into a transnational criminal empire, establishing its presence abroad from around 2018 onwards, especially in Colombia, Peru, and Chile.

SEE ALSO: *Three Stages in the Construction of the Tren de Aragua's Transnational Empire*

Ahead of the US presidential election in November, the issues of migration and crime have pushed Tren de Aragua to the forefront of political discussion, making it expedient for both Democrats and Republicans to take a tough stance against the organization.

The US Treasury **sanctioned** Venezuela's most significant criminal export as a transnational criminal organization in July, and Texas governor Greg Abbott recently designated it a terrorist organization.

US authorities have identified suspected members of Tren de Aragua across the country in recent months and made a number of arrests.

But the gang's reputation appears to have grown more quickly than its actual presence in the United States.

InSight Crime has been tracking the group **for years**. Here's what we know.

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Are They?

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Venezuela's Tren de Aragua Gang Muscling into Colombia Border Area

10 Jul 2019



InSight Crime has been tracking the group [for years](#). Here's what we know.

Who Are They?

The lack of any major identifying characteristics among [Tren de Aragua](#) members makes it difficult to know when a criminal is truly part of the organization.

Certain US law enforcement authorities have put out warnings about Tren de Aragua-related tattoos, such as rifles or Michael Jordan logos, and have [even arrested](#) suspects based on their tattoos. While a Chilean regional prosecutor found that multiple members of one Tren de Aragua-linked cell there bore the same tattoo, members do not consistently identify themselves using specific tattoos or adopt tattoos as part of an initiation process.

The lack of information sharing between US and Venezuelan authorities means law enforcement officials cannot easily discover if an individual is a former prisoner or suspected Tren de Aragua member, nor will such information be flagged for any individuals crossing the border into the country.

"As a federal agent, we have no way of vetting these people other than the honor system," US Border Patrol Council Vice President Chris Cabrera told reporters at a press conference in September. "If they tell us their name, we can't check against Venezuela's database."

Additionally, the infamy Tren de Aragua has [developed](#) has led to imposters adopting its name as a method of instilling fear and ensuring compliance from their victims, further complicating efforts to establish whether a suspect is a genuine member or not.

Where Are They?

Although authorities' methods of identifying Tren de Aragua members or their links to the wider organization remain unclear, reports of alleged Tren de Aragua activity have arisen in at least ten US states. Cases in Colorado, Texas, and New York have received prominent attention, alongside others in Illinois, Florida, Louisiana, Indiana, Georgia, Virginia, and New Jersey.

Police in Aurora, Colorado, have identified several individuals [referred](#) to as "documented Tren de Aragua members," but have not explained the specific documentation linking them to the gang.

Texas governor Abbott stated that many of the [more than 20 individuals arrested](#) at a hotel in El Paso in early September were suspected Tren de Aragua members, and that officials arrested more than 100 suspected members during a disturbance at the El Paso border in March.

[Manage consent](#) not clarify how officials identified the suspected members. Officials in



Venezuela's Tren de Aragua Gang Seeks to Grow Inside Brazil Prisons

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Texas governor Abbott stated that many of the [more than 20 individuals arrested](#) at a hotel in El Paso in early September were suspected Tren de Aragua members, and that officials arrested more than 100 suspected members during a disturbance at the El Paso border in March.

He did not clarify how officials identified the suspected members. Officials in both Texas and Colorado have also created dedicated task forces aimed at tackling the gang.

What Do They Do?

Some of the crimes committed by alleged members in the United States align with Tren de Aragua's [most common crimes](#). The group is known for human trafficking and human smuggling, in particular, which it adopted during its expansion across South America.

SEE ALSO: [Is Venezuela's Tren de Aragua Behind Surge in Chile Kidnappings?](#)

Other cases in the US involve petty crimes like burglary or robbery, which are not as closely associated with the organization's international cells. And there have been few reported cases of extortion, a central pillar of the group's criminal portfolio.

Additionally, there is no evidence, thus far, of cells in the United States cooperating with one another or with other criminal groups. Authorities have also not revealed any proof of criminals receiving specific instructions from the organization's leadership or sending money to Venezuela or other foreign countries.

Featured image: Texas governor Greg Abbott giving a press conference on Tren de Aragua Credit: @GregAbbott_TX / X

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How Much of a Threat is Tren de Aragua in the U.S.?

BY CHARLES LARRATT-SMITH AND JOHN POLGA-HECIMOVICH
DECEMBER 9, 2024

The Venezuelan prison gang was a frequent theme in Donald Trump's campaign rhetoric on immigration. But its reach in the U.S. is exaggerated.



A member of the Tren de Aragua gang in the custody of Peruvian police in Lima in October 2023.

Cris Bourroncie/AFP via Getty Images



Reading Time: 8 minutes

On October 11, Donald Trump held a campaign event in Aurora, Colorado, where the then-Republican party candidate and now president-elect appeared on stage flanked by large placards bearing mugshots of Venezuelan immigrants who had been arrested following their arrival to the United States. These campaign props were adorned with the words “Occupied America: TDA Gang Members in Aurora,” while the backdrop of the stage was draped in banners bearing the slogan “Deport Illegals Now.” It seemed unusual for the Trump campaign to spend valuable time and energy to organize a rally in a state widely expected to vote Democratic, during the homestretch of what appeared at the time to be a close electoral contest. But the purpose of this campaign event was above all else symbolic.

In late August, video footage had emerged of a group of armed Venezuelan migrants trying to forcibly enter an apartment in a housing

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campaign event was above all else symbolic.

In late August, video footage had emerged of a group of armed Venezuelan migrants trying to forcibly enter an apartment in a housing complex in this nondescript suburb of Denver, a city that has at times struggled to accommodate a large wave of migrants from Latin America over the past several years. After the building's out-of-state landlord claimed the building had been taken over by a Venezuelan prison gang, Tren de Aragua (TdA), the mayor of Aurora repeated the claim, before reversing himself as the incident was seized upon by conservative politicians, media pundits, and online influencers to make exaggerated claims that the city had been "taken over" by criminals from Venezuela.

As the election approached, this once largely unknown criminal organization was thrust into the spotlight as an emergent threat to U.S. national security, its "vicious" activities attracting the attention of Republican legislators and executive branch agencies. In the aftermath of a resounding Trump victory at the polls, buoyed in part by the electorate's disapproval with the Biden administration's handling of immigration and border enforcement, an important yet largely unanswered question remains: Does TdA actually pose a legitimate threat to U.S. national security?

Surprisingly little is known about Tren de Aragua, a fact that has given it great power and allowed it to assume the shape of a chimera in the eyes of both law enforcement and other criminal actors. Several governments in the Americas have sounded the alarm about the group, while criminals operating in the Venezuelan diaspora have claimed links to TdA to bolster their reputations and criminal legitimacy. The gang has permanent cells in Peru and in Chile, where it carried out a high-profile assassination in 2023. At the same time, evidence suggests that the TdA has had trouble expanding in places with competitive criminal markets and where state coercive capacity is strong.

Given all of this, the fear and campaign-season rhetoric in the U.S. is overblown. Despite the real threat TdA poses to many Venezuelan migrants, it's unlikely the group has much power or reach in the U.S., where other organized criminal organizations pose much more of a threat to citizens and TdA itself.



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BY BRUCE WATSON



Latin America faces numerous challenges in 2025, including Donald Trump's return to the White House. Our special report examines four trends to watch.

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A police officer at a checkpoint in Bogotá, where Tren de Aragua operates in some neighborhoods, in October. Photo by Juancho Torres/Anadolu via Getty Images.

What we know about Tren de Aragua

The origins of TdA are well documented. The group first emerged in 2005, as a trade union formed to build a railroad during the government of Hugo Chávez. The consortium of workers quickly began embezzling funds, before moving into extorting contractors. By the time the project was abandoned in 2011, this nucleus of ersatz railway workers had metamorphosed into a criminal organization known as el Tren de Aragua. The group quickly developed a formidable presence in the state's notorious Tocarón prison. It was there that its current leader, Héctor Rusthenford Guerrero Flores (alias 'Niño Guerrero'), joined in 2013, quickly becoming the '*pran*'—an incarcerated gang leader who controls prisons from the inside while simultaneously directing criminal organizations outside of them. Under his tutelage, TdA expanded to several neighboring states and became Venezuela's largest criminal organization of its kind, engaging principally in extortion, street-level drug dealing, and human trafficking.

The rise of TdA coincided with the onset of the Venezuelan economic crisis. The implosion of the economy combined with hyperinflation led to the virtual collapse of the country's social safety net, prompting millions of young Venezuelans to migrate. Sensing an opportunity in the crisis, TdA expanded its operations to the porous border region and charged outgoing migrants fees to exit through irregular border crossings, or '*trochas*', while other members reportedly embedded themselves in migrant flows heading to other South American countries to prey on their compatriots. With the worsening of the migrant crisis in 2018, reports began to surface from law enforcement in Colombia, Peru, and Chile that TdA had established chapters and was engaged in widespread criminal activities in those countries.

Still, TdA had limited success setting up operations in Colombia, despite the fact that the two countries share a 1,379 mile-long border. Gang members who tried to make incursions into border enclaves such as Arauca and Cúcuta were met with violent resistance from Colombian insurgent groups such as the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) and Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) dissident factions, demonstrating the extreme difficulties facing new entrants into Colombia's established criminal market. Other apparent TdA chapters were more successful in establishing a presence elsewhere in less competitive environs, particularly in Bogotá, where they principally devoted themselves to micro-level extortion and drug dealing in poorer

Colombia's established criminal market. Other apparent TdA chapters were more successful in establishing a presence elsewhere in less competitive environs, particularly in Bogotá, where they principally devoted themselves to micro-level extortion and drug dealing in poorer neighborhoods. Tellingly, even in these spaces TdA operatives subcontract smaller local gangs and authorize them to use their name to generate fear and compliance with their victims.

TdA found it easier to expand and establish roots in places with large contingents of Venezuelan migrants and fewer local criminal rivals. This is especially true of Chile and Peru, where the group appears to have established permanent cells, from Santiago and Lima to the Peru-Chile and Chile-Bolivia border areas. While the gang makes money from human trafficking, narcotrafficking, and extortion, it has also wielded violence there, particularly against fellow Venezuelan migrants. In a case that made international headlines, TdA allegedly planned and carried out the kidnapping and heinous murder of Ronald Ojeda, a former first lieutenant in Venezuela's armed forces and an opponent of the Venezuelan regime, in March 2023 in Chile. The lack of criminal competitors in these places was decisive in the group's expansion, in contrast to Ecuador or Brazil, where there is little evidence of permanent cells.

The gang's relationship with Venezuelan security forces and government officials is also shrouded in mystery, but hints at organizational weaknesses. TdA's initial growth was driven by the state's unofficial devolution of power to the *pranes* under Prison Minister Iris Varela and the impunity it enjoyed within and outside of Tócorón. Under this agreement, it was allowed to operate out of the prison for years with the government's knowledge and tacit consent. However, in September 2023, perhaps in response to a breakdown in the *pax mafiosa*, the government raided the prison, effectively dismantling the group's headquarters. Nonetheless, TdA's leader, Guerrero, and others appear to have received advanced warning and escaped via tunnel prior to the raid. Telling, this episode illustrates not only TdA's relationship to the Venezuelan state, but how much weaker TdA is compared to Mexico's Sinaloa Cartel and the Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación (CJNG), Colombia's ELN, EMC, and EGC, Ecuador's Los Choneros, or Brazil's Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC), none of which could plausibly be dismantled through a single coordinated government raid.

Transnational threat or electoral bogeyman?

Over the past two decades, criminality in Venezuela skyrocketed largely as a result of the failed security policies of *chavismo*, making it one of the most dangerous countries on the planet. The implosion of the Venezuelan economy coupled with the authoritarian consolidation of Nicolás Maduro's regime led to an unprecedented exodus of largely working class and poorer Venezuelans throughout the Americas. Unsurprisingly, much of the Venezuelan criminal class has similarly fled these worsening conditions during this period with many attempting to re-establish their

Maduro's regime led to an unprecedented exodus of largely working class and poorer Venezuelans throughout the Americas. Unsurprisingly, much of the Venezuelan criminal class has similarly fled these worsening conditions during this period with many attempting to re-establish their illicit careers abroad, generating palpable xenophobia and fervent anti-immigrant sentiment in the process.

Although TdA never achieved a nationwide presence in its home country, the gang has somehow gained notoriety as the most fearsome transnational criminal organization across the Americas from Chile to the United States in the span of a few years. Rather than the TdA expanding its tentacles throughout South and North America from its former base in Tócorón and threatening to destabilize the entire region, it is far more probable that any and all criminal acts committed abroad by a miniscule percentage of the Venezuelan diaspora are now attributed to TdA due to a paucity of real information on the criminal group's structure and organizational culture. Reported factions of the group in Chile and Peru, for example, operate under names such as the Gallegos, the Hijos de Dios, and Dinastía Alayón, making it difficult for law enforcement to determine their exact relationship to the larger group.

Recent investigative reports from InSight Crime highlight several inconvenient truths about this Venezuelan gang that challenge the existing narrative in the United States. Among other things, the tattoos or dress codes ascribed to TdA members in the U.S. has little backing in other places where the gang has been known to operate. The origin of that information is also uncertain, given that U.S. and Venezuelan authorities do not share intelligence. Of course, one consequence of the lack of clear identifiers is the ease with which non-affiliated Venezuelan criminals in the diaspora may claim membership in order to further burnish their credentials in the pursuit of illegal activities.

Of equal importance, nearly no claims made by U.S. law enforcement about crimes committed by purported members of TdA have been substantiated by hard evidence that directly connects the accused with the organization in Venezuela. In fact, none of the national, state, and local law enforcement agencies contacted in the U.S. by InSight Crime in April 2024 reported any significant presence of TdA in their jurisdictions.

Despite assertions from some quarters that TdA is conspiring to seize control of criminal rackets in major U.S. cities, the actual organizational potential of Venezuelan criminals to do so is overblown, particularly in the United States. In Venezuela, the gang was only strong until the government decided to combat it, and law enforcement operations have clamped down on supposed structures in other South American countries. For these reasons, it would be difficult for the TdA to establish itself in the U.S. while coordinating with what remains of the organization's fugitive hierarchy in Venezuela. Among other things, the gang lacks control over the migrant smuggling and human trafficking routes in the U.S. that were so vital to its expansion to prisons and urban areas in South America. Instead, small factions of apparent TdA members

organization's fugitive hierarchy in Venezuela. Among other things, the gang lacks control over the migrant smuggling and human trafficking routes in the U.S. that were so vital to its expansion to prisons and urban areas in South America. Instead, small factions of apparent TdA members have offered their services to more powerful Mexican cartels that dominate the border.

The alarmism over Tren de Aragua in the U.S., in short, does not correspond to the facts on the ground as we know them. The recent assertion in Senator Rubio and Representative Salazar's petition to President Biden that TdA is "an invading criminal army from a prison in Venezuela that has spread their brutality and chaos to U.S. cities and small towns" is emblematic of the exaggeration. Not to be outdone by fellow Republicans from Florida, Texas Governor Greg Abbott officially designated TdA as a "foreign terrorist organization" in mid-September, even though the gang lacks any meaningful political criteria to meet this definition. In the final days of the recent election, the governor further demanded that Vice President and Democratic candidate Kamala Harris follow suit and classify TdA along those same lines.

Some Venezuelan criminals have succeeded in entering the United States in recent years, including perhaps a few full-fledged TdA members with direct links to the Venezuelan hierarchy. But it is highly unlikely that they will be able to mobilize in any meaningful way in the United States. Based on the recent successes of law enforcement in Chile, Peru, and Colombia in capturing and dismantling substantial TdA structures, TdA and other aspiring Venezuelan criminals will likely fare no better in the U.S. when confronted by police with considerably greater resources at their disposal than their Andean counterparts.

The fallout from the campaign

While perhaps an effective electoral ploy, it's dangerous to exaggerate TdA's threat for several reasons. Paying disproportionate attention to the group takes valuable time and resources away from prosecuting more powerful transnational organized criminal groups, such as the CJNG or the Sinaloa Cartel, that are largely responsible for fueling the opioid crisis in the United States and destabilizing other countries in the region.

And using TdA to support the narrative that immigrants are criminals is damaging to the Venezuelan diaspora in the United States. If the Department of Homeland Security's recent estimation that there are 600 active TdA members in the United States is in fact true, these individuals would still constitute 0.09% of the estimated 700,000 Venezuelans who have been paroled into the United States since the beginning of the humanitarian crisis. But Trump invoked Venezuelans more than any other nationality in his anti-immigrant campaign rhetoric, and his party members followed suit, creating additional risks for those living in stigmatized communities such as Aurora. While the scope, scale, and feasibility of the impending deportation campaign that Trump has promised remains unknown, it is highly probable that Venezuelan migrants will be severely affected by these draconian measures, whether

damaging to the Venezuelan diaspora in the United States. If the Department of Homeland Security's recent estimation that there are 600 active TdA members in the United States is in fact true, these individuals would still constitute 0.09% of the estimated 700,000 Venezuelans who have been paroled into the United States since the beginning of the humanitarian crisis. But Trump invoked Venezuelans more than any other nationality in his anti-immigrant campaign rhetoric, and his party members followed suit, creating additional risks for those living in stigmatized communities such as Aurora. While the scope, scale, and feasibility of the impending deportation campaign that Trump has promised remains unknown, it is highly probable that Venezuelan migrants will be severely affected by these draconian measures, whether they are criminals or not.

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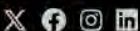
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Dec. 16, 2023 C-SPAN

Dec. 16, 2023 Campaign Speech by Donald Trump in
Durham, New Hampshire

<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: We've got a 2 lot of work to do. You know, when they let -- I 3 think the real number is 15, 16 million people 4 into our country. When they do that, we've got a 5 lot of work to do. They're poisoning the blood 6 of our country. That's what they've done. They 7 poison mental institutions and prisons all over 8 the world. Not just in South America, not just 9 the three or four countries that we think about, 10 but all over the world, they're coming into our 11 country from Africa, from Asia, all over the 12 world. They're pouring into our country. 13 Nobody's even looking at them. They just come 14 in. The crime is going to be tremendous. The 15 terrorism is going to be -- terrorism is going to 16 be. And then we built a tremendous piece of the 17 wall, and then we're going to build more. And 18 the election was rigged, and we didn't do it, but 19 I figured they'd just throw it up. It would have 20 taken three weeks. It was all built, it was all 21 ready to be just hoisted up. The exact wall that 22 the border patrol, who are incredible, Brandon 23 Judd and all of the people at border patrol. 24 That's exactly what they designed. They had the 25 anti-climb bars, they had everything. And you</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 CERTIFICATION 2 3 I, Sonya Ledanski Hyde, certify that the 4 foregoing transcript is a true and accurate 5 record of the proceedings. 6 7 8 9  10 11 Veritext Legal Solutions 12 330 Old Country Road 13 Suite 300 14 Mineola, NY 11501 15 16 Date: February 18, 2025 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p>
<p>1 know what they did? They didn't want it to go 2 up. They sold it for five cents on the dollar. 3 Can you believe it? All of that stuff. It's 4 very sad. But this is far more than a campaign, 5 this is the greatest political movement in the 6 history of our country. It really is. 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p>	

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September 10, 2024
Presidential Debate
Vice President Kamala Harris (D) and Former
President Donald Trump (R), moderated by Linsey
Davis and David Muire (ABC News)

<p>1 DAVID MUIR: Good evening, I'm David 2 Muir. And thank you for joining us for tonight's 3 ABC News Presidential Debate. We want to welcome 4 viewers watching on ABC and around the world 5 tonight. Vice President Kamala Harris and 6 President Donald Trump are just moments away from 7 taking the stage in this unprecedented race for 8 president. 9 LINSEY DAVIS: And I'm Linsey Davis. 10 Tonight's meeting could be the most consequential 11 event of their campaigns, with Election Day now 12 less than two months away. For Vice President 13 Kamala Harris, this is her first debate since 14 President Biden withdrew from the race on July 15 21st. Of course, that decision followed his 16 debate against President Donald Trump in June. 17 Since then, this race has taken on an entirely 18 new dynamic. 19 DAVID MUIR: And that brings us to the 20 rules of tonight's debate: 90 minutes with two 21 commercial breaks. No topics or questions have 22 been shared with the campaigns. The candidates 23 will have two minutes to answer questions. And 24 this is the clock. That's what they'll be 25 seeing. Two minutes for rebuttals and one minute</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 looking forward to a spirited and thoughtful 2 debate. 3 DAVID MUIR: So, let's get started. I 4 want to begin tonight with the issue voters 5 repeatedly say is their number one issue, and 6 that is the economy and the cost of living in 7 this country. Vice President Harris, you and 8 President Trump were elected four years ago and 9 your opponent on the stage here tonight often 10 asks his supporters, are you better off than you 11 were four years ago? When it comes to the 12 economy, do you believe Americans are better off 13 than they were four years ago? 14 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: So, I 15 was raised as a middle-class kid. And I am 16 actually the only person on this stage who has a 17 plan that is about lifting up the middle class 18 and working people of America. I believe in the 19 ambition, the aspirations, the dreams of the 20 American people. And that is why I imagine and 21 have actually a plan to build what I call an 22 opportunity economy. Because here's the thing. 23 We know that we have a, a shortage of homes and 24 housing, and the cost of housing is too expensive 25 for far too many people. We know that young</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p>
<p>1 for follow-ups, clarifications, or responses. 2 Their microphones will only be turned on when 3 it's their turn to speak. No prewritten notes 4 allowed. There is no audience here tonight in 5 this hall at the National Constitution Center. 6 This is an intimate setting for two candidates 7 who have never met. 8 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump won the 9 coin toss. He chose to deliver the final closing 10 statement of the evening. Vice President Harris 11 selected the podium to the right. 12 DAVID MUIR: So, let's now welcome the 13 candidates to the stage. Vice President Kamala 14 Harris and President Donald Trump. 15 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Kamala 16 Harris. Let's have a good debate. 17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Nice to see 18 you. Have fun. 19 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Thank 20 you. 21 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Thank you. 22 DAVID MUIR: Welcome to you both. It's 23 wonderful to have you. It's an honor to have you 24 both here tonight. 25 LINSEY DAVIS: Good evening, we are</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p>	<p>1 families need support to raise their children. 2 And I intend on extending a tax cut for those 3 families of \$6,000, which is the largest child 4 tax credit that we have given in a long time. So 5 that those young families can afford to buy a 6 crib, buy a car seat, buy clothes for their 7 children. My passion, one of them, is small 8 businesses. I was actually -- my mother raised 9 my sister and me but there was a woman who helped 10 raise us. We call her our second mother. She 11 was a small business owner. I love our small 12 businesses. My plan is to give a \$50,000 tax 13 deduction to start up small businesses, knowing 14 they are part of the backbone of America's 15 economy. My opponent, on the other hand, his 16 plan is to do what he has done before, which is 17 to provide a tax cut for billionaires and big 18 corporations, which will result in \$5 trillion to 19 America's deficit. My opponent has a plan that I 20 call the Trump sales tax, which would be a 20 21 percent tax on everyday goods that you rely on to 22 get through the month. Economists have said that 23 that Trump's sales tax would actually result for 24 middle-class families in about \$4,000 more a year 25 because of his policies and his ideas about what</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p>

<p>1 should be the backs of middle-class people paying 2 for tax cuts for billionaires.</p> <p>3 DAVID MUIR: President Trump, I'll give 4 you two minutes.</p> <p>5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: First of all, 6 I have no sales tax. That's an incorrect 7 statement. She knows that. We're doing tariffs 8 on other countries. Other countries are going to 9 finally, after 75 years, pay us back for all that 10 we've done for the world. And the tariff will be 11 substantial in some cases. I took in billions 12 and billions of dollars, as you know, from China. 13 In fact, they never took the tariff off because 14 it was so much money they can't. It would 15 totally destroy everything that they've set out 16 to do. They're taking in billions of dollars 17 from China and other places. They've left the 18 tariffs on. When I had it, I had tariffs and yet 19 I had no inflation. Look, we've had a terrible 20 economy because inflation has -- which is really 21 known as a country buster. It breaks up 22 countries. We have inflation like very few 23 people have ever seen before. Probably the worst 24 in our nation's history. We were at 21 percent. 25 But that's being generous because many things are</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 immigration and border security during this 2 debate. But I would like to let Vice President 3 Harris respond on the economy here.</p> <p>4 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Well, I 5 would love to. Let's talk about what Donald 6 Trump left us. Donald Trump left us the worst 7 unemployment since the Great Depression. Donald 8 Trump left us the worst public health epidemic in 9 a century. Donald Trump left us the worst attack 10 on our democracy since the Civil War. And what 11 we have done is clean up Donald Trump's mess. 12 What we have done and what I intend to do is 13 build on what we know are the aspirations and the 14 hopes of the American people. But I'm going to 15 tell you all, in this debate tonight, you're 16 going to hear from the same old, tired playbook, 17 a bunch of lies, grievances and name-calling. 18 What you're going to hear tonight is a detailed 19 and dangerous plan called Project 2025 that the 20 former president intends on implementing if he 21 were elected again. I believe very strongly that 22 the American people want a president who 23 understands the importance of bringing us 24 together knowing we have so much more in common 25 than what separates us. And I pledge to you to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p>
<p>1 50, 60, 70, and 80 percent higher than they were 2 just a few years ago. This has been a disaster 3 for people, for the middle class, but for every 4 class. On top of that, we have millions of 5 people pouring into our country from prisons and 6 jails, from mental institutions and insane 7 asylums. And they're coming in and they're 8 taking jobs that are occupied right now by 9 African Americans and Hispanics and also unions. 10 Unions are going to be affected very soon. And 11 you see what's happening.</p> <p>12 You see what's happening with towns 13 throughout the United States. You look at 14 Springfield, Ohio. You look at Aurora in 15 Colorado. They are taking over the towns. 16 They're taking over buildings. They're going in 17 violently. These are the people that she and 18 Biden let into our country. And they're 19 destroying our country. They're dangerous. 20 They're at the highest level of criminality. And 21 we have to get them out. We have to get them out 22 fast. I created one of the greatest economies in 23 the history of our country. I'll do it again and 24 even better.</p> <p>25 DAVID MUIR: We are going to get to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 be a president for all Americans.</p> <p>2 DAVID MUIR: President Trump, I'll give 3 you a minute here to respond.</p> <p>4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Number one, I 5 have nothing to do, as you know and as she knows 6 better than anyone, I have nothing to do with 7 Project 2025. That's out there. I haven't read 8 it. I don't want to read it purposely. I'm not 9 going to read it. This was a group of people 10 that got together, they came up with some ideas. 11 I guess some good, some bad. But it makes no 12 difference. I have nothing to do -- everybody 13 knows I'm an open book. Everybody knows what I'm 14 going to do. Cut taxes very substantially. And 15 create a great economy like I did before. We had 16 the greatest economy.</p> <p>17 We got hit with a pandemic. And the 18 pandemic was -- not since 1917 where 100 million 19 people died has there been anything like it. We 20 did a phenomenal job with the pandemic. We 21 handed them over a country where the economy and 22 where the stock market was higher than it was 23 before the pandemic came in. Nobody's ever seen 24 anything like it. We made ventilators for the 25 entire world. We got gowns. We got masks. We</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p>

<p>1 did things that nobody thought possible. And 2 people give me credit for rebuilding the 3 military. They give me credit for a lot of 4 things. But not enough credit for the great job 5 we did with the pandemic. But the only jobs they 6 got were bounce-back jobs. These were jobs, 7 bounce-back. And it bounced back, and it went to 8 their benefit. But I was the one that created 9 them. They know it and so does everybody else. 10 DAVID MUIR: Vice President Harris, 11 I'll let you respond. 12 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: So, 13 Donald Trump has no plan for you. And when you 14 look at his economic plan, it's all about tax 15 breaks for the richest people. I am offering 16 what I describe as an opportunity economy, and 17 the best economists in our country, if not the 18 world, have reviewed our relative plans for the 19 future of America. What Goldman Sachs has said 20 is that Donald Trump's plan would make the 21 economy worse. Mine would strengthen the 22 economy. What the Wharton School has said is 23 Donald Trump's plan would actually explode the 24 deficit. Sixteen Nobel laureates have described 25 his economic plan as something that would</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 The vice president brought up your tariffs you 2 responded and let's drill down on this because 3 your plan is, what she calls is a essentially a 4 national sales tax. Your proposal calls for 5 tariffs, as you pointed out here, on foreign 6 imports across the board. You recently said that 7 you might double your plan, imposing tariffs up 8 to 20 percent on good coming into this country. 9 As you know, many economists say that with 10 tariffs at that level costs are then passed onto 11 the consumer. Vice President Harris has argued 12 it'll mean higher prices on gas, food, clothing 13 medication arguing it costs the typical family 14 nearly four thousand dollars a year. Do you 15 believe Americans can afford higher prices 16 because of tariffs. 17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: They aren't 18 going to have higher prices what's going to have, 19 and who's going to have higher prices is China 20 and all of the countries that have been ripping 21 us off for years. I charge, I was the only 22 president ever -- China was paying us hundreds of 23 billions of dollars and so were other countries 24 and you know if she doesn't like them, they 25 should have gone out and they should have</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p>
<p>1 increase inflation and, by the middle of next 2 year, would invite a recession. You just have to 3 look at where we are and where we stand on the 4 issues. And I'd invite you to know that Donald 5 Trump actually has no plan for you, because he is 6 more interested in defending himself than he is 7 in looking out for you. 8 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: That's just a 9 sound bite. They gave her that to say. Look, I 10 went to the Wharton School of Finance and many of 11 those professors, the top professors, think my 12 plan is a brilliant plan, it's a great plan. 13 It's a plan that's going to bring up our worth, 14 our value as a country. It's going to make 15 people want to be able to go and work and create 16 jobs and create a lot of good, solid money for 17 our -- for our country. And just to finish off, 18 she doesn't have a plan. She copied Biden's 19 plan. And it's like four sentences, like run- 20 Spot-run. Four sentences that are just oh, we'll 21 try and lower taxes. She doesn't have a plan. 22 Take a look at her plan. She doesn't have a 23 plan. 24 DAVID MUIR: Mr. President, I do want 25 to drill down on something you both brought up.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p>	<p>1 immediately cut the tariffs, but those tariffs 2 are there three and a half years now under their 3 administration. We are going to take in billions 4 of dollars, hundreds of billions of dollars. I 5 had no inflation, virtually no inflation, they 6 had the highest inflation, perhaps in the history 7 of our country because I've never seen a worse 8 period of time. People can't go out and buy 9 cereal or bacon or eggs or anything else. These 10 -- the people of our country are absolutely dying 11 with what they've done. They've destroyed the 12 economy and all you have to do is look at a poll. 13 The polls say 80 and 85 and even 90 percent that 14 the Trump economy was great that their economy 15 was terrible. 16 DAVID MUIR: Vice President Harris, I 17 do want to ask for your response, and you heard 18 what the president said there because the Biden 19 administration did keep a number of the Trump 20 tariffs in place so how do you respond? 21 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Well, 22 let's be clear that the Trump administration 23 resulted in a trade deficit, one of the highest 24 we've ever seen in the history of America. He 25 invited trade wars; you want to talk about his</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p>

<p>1 deal with China -- what he ended up doing is 2 under Donald Trump's presidency he ended up 3 selling American chips to China to help them 4 improve and modernize their military. Basically, 5 sold us out, when a policy about China should be 6 in making sure the United States of America wins 7 the competition for the 21st century. Which 8 means focusing on the details of what that 9 requires, focusing on relationships with our 10 allies; focusing on investing in American based 11 technology so that we win the race on A.I., on 12 quantum computing; focusing on what we need to do 13 to support America's workforce, so that we don't 14 end up having the -- on the short end of the 15 stick in terms of workers' rights. But what 16 Donald Trump did, let's talk about this, with 17 COVID, is he actually thanked President Xi for 18 what he did during COVID. Look at his tweet. 19 "Thank you, President Xi," exclamation point. 20 When we know that Xi was responsible for lacking 21 and not giving us transparency about the origins 22 of COVID. 23 DAVID MUIR: President Trump, I'll let 24 you respond. 25 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: First of all, Page 14</p>	<p>1 thing that can happen to our economy. They have, 2 and she has, destroyed our country with policy 3 that's insane. Almost policy that you'd say they 4 have to hate our country. 5 DAVID MUIR: President Trump, thank 6 you. Linsey? 7 LINSEY DAVIS: I want to turn to the 8 issue of abortion. President Trump, you've often 9 touted that you were able to kill Roe v. Wade. 10 Last year, you said that you were proud to be the 11 most pro-life president in American history. 12 Then last month you said that your administration 13 would be great for women and their reproductive 14 rights. In your home state of Florida, you 15 surprised many with regard to your six-week 16 abortion ban because you initially had said that 17 it was too short and you said, "I'm going to be 18 voting that we need more than six weeks." But 19 then the very next day, you reversed course and 20 said you would vote to support the six-week ban. 21 Vice President Harris says that women shouldn't 22 trust you on the issue of abortion because you've 23 changed your position so many times. Therefore, 24 why should they trust you? 25 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, the Page 16</p>
<p>1 they bought their chips from Taiwan. We hardly 2 make chips anymore because of philosophies like 3 they have and policies like they have. I don't 4 say her because she has no policy. Everything 5 that she believed three years ago and four years 6 ago is out the window. She's going to my 7 philosophy now. In fact, I was going to send her 8 a MAGA hat. She's gone to my philosophy. But, 9 if she ever got elected, she'd change it. And it 10 will be the end of our country. She's a Marxist. 11 Everybody knows she's a Marxist. Her father's a 12 Marxist professor in economics. And he taught 13 her well. But when you look at what she's done 14 to our country and when you look at these 15 millions and millions of people that are pouring 16 into our country monthly where it's, I believe 21 17 million people, not the 15 that people say, and I 18 think it's a lot higher than the 21. That's 19 bigger than New York state. Pouring in. And 20 just look at what they're doing to our country. 21 They're criminals. Many of these people coming 22 in are criminals. And that's bad for our economy 23 too. You know, you mentioned before, we'll talk 24 about immigration later. 25 Well, bad immigration is the worst Page 15</p>	<p>1 reason I'm doing that vote is because the plan 2 is, as you know, the vote is, they have abortion 3 in the ninth month. They even have, and you can 4 look at the governor of West Virginia, the 5 previous governor of West Virginia, not the 6 current governor, who's doing an excellent job, 7 but the governor before. He said the baby will 8 be born and we will decide what to do with the 9 baby. In other words, we'll execute the baby. 10 And that's why I did that because that 11 predominates. Because they're radical. The 12 Democrats are radical in that. And her vice- 13 presidential pick, which I think was a horrible 14 pick, by the way for our country, because he is 15 really out of it. But her vice-presidential pick 16 says abortion in the ninth month is absolutely 17 fine. He also says execution after birth it's 18 execution, no longer abortion, because the baby 19 is born, is okay. And that's not okay with me. 20 Hence the vote. But what I did is something, for 21 52 years they've been trying to get Roe v. Wade 22 into the states. 23 And through the genius and heart and 24 strength of six Supreme Court justices we were 25 able to do that. Now, I believe in the Page 17</p>

<p>1 exceptions for rape, incest, and life of the 2 mother. I believe strongly in it. Ronald Reagan 3 did also. Eighty-five percent of Republicans do 4 -- exceptions. It's very important. But we were 5 able to get it. And now states are voting on it. 6 And for the first time you're going to see -- 7 look, this is an issue that's torn our country 8 apart for 52 years. Every legal scholar, every 9 Democrat, every Republican, liberal, 10 conservative, they all wanted this issue to be 11 brought back to the states where the people could 12 vote. And that's what happened, happened. Now, 13 Ohio, the vote was somewhat liberal. Kansas the 14 vote was somewhat liberal. Much more liberal 15 than people would have thought. But each 16 individual state is voting. It's the vote of the 17 people now. It's not tied up in the federal 18 government. I did a great service in doing it. 19 It took courage to do it. And the Supreme Court 20 had great courage in doing it. And I give 21 tremendous credit to those six justices. 22 LINSEY DAVIS: There is no state in 23 this country where it is legal to kill a baby 24 after it's born. Madam Vice-President, I want to 25 get your response to President Trump.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 being denied care in an emergency room because 2 the health care providers are afraid, they might 3 go to jail and she's bleeding out in a car in the 4 parking lot? She didn't want that. Her husband 5 didn't want that. A 12 or 13-year-old survivor 6 of incest being forced to carry a pregnancy to 7 term? They don't want that. And I pledge to you 8 when Congress passes a bill to put back in place 9 the protections of Roe v. Wade as President of 10 the United States, I will proudly sign it into 11 law. But understand, if Donald Trump were to be 12 re-elected, he will sign a national abortion ban. 13 Understand, in his Project 2025 there would be a 14 national abortion -- a monitor that would be 15 monitoring your pregnancies, your miscarriages. 16 I think the American people believe that certain 17 freedoms, in particular the freedom to make 18 decisions about one's own body, should not be 19 made by the government. 20 LINSEY DAVIS: Thank you, Vice 21 President Harris. 22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, there 23 she goes again. It's a lie. I'm not signing a 24 ban. And there's no reason to sign a ban. 25 Because we've gotten what everybody wanted.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p>
<p>1 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Well, as 2 I said, you're going to hear a bunch of lies. 3 And that's not actually a surprising fact. Let's 4 understand how we got here. Donald Trump hand- 5 selected three members of the United States 6 Supreme Court with the intention that they would 7 undo the protections of Roe v. Wade. And they 8 did exactly as he intended. And now in over 20 9 states there are Trump abortion bans which make 10 it criminal for a doctor or nurse to provide 11 health care. In one state it provides prison for 12 life. Trump abortion bans that make no exception 13 even for rape and incest. Which understand what 14 that means: A survivor of a crime of violation to 15 their body, does not have the right to make a 16 decision about what happens to their body next. 17 That is immoral. And one does not have to 18 abandon their faith or deeply held beliefs to 19 agree the government, and Donald Trump certainly, 20 should not be telling a woman what to do with her 21 body. 22 I have talked with women around our 23 country. You want to talk about this is what 24 people wanted? Pregnant women who want to carry 25 a pregnancy to term suffering from a miscarriage,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p>	<p>1 Democrats, Republicans, and everybody else and 2 every legal scholar wanted it to be brought back 3 into the states. And the states are voting. And 4 it may take a little time, but for 52 years this 5 issue has torn our country apart. And they've 6 wanted it back in the states. And I did 7 something that nobody thought was possible. The 8 states are now voting. What she says is an 9 absolute lie. And as far as the abortion ban, 10 no, I'm not in favor of abortion ban. But it 11 doesn't matter because this issue has now been 12 taken over by the states. 13 LINSEY DAVIS: Would you veto a 14 national abortion ban if it came to your desk -- 15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- well, I 16 won't have to because again -- two things. 17 Number one, she said she'll go back to Congress. 18 She'll never get the vote. It's impossible for 19 her to get the vote. Especially now with a 50-50 20 in -- essentially 50-50 in both Senate and the 21 House. She's not going to get the vote. She 22 can't get the vote. She won't even come close to 23 it. So, it's just talk. You know what it 24 reminds me of? When they said they're going to 25 get student loans terminated and it ended up</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p>

<p>1 being a total catastrophe. The student loans -- 2 and then her -- I think probably her boss, if you 3 call them a boss, he spends all his time on the 4 beach -- but look, her boss went out and said 5 we'll do it again, we'll do it a different way. 6 He went out, got rejected again by the Supreme 7 Court. So, all these students got taunted with 8 this whole thing about -- this whole idea. And 9 how unfair that would have been -- part of the 10 reason they lost -- to the millions and millions 11 of people that had to pay off their student 12 loans. They didn't get it for free. But they 13 were saying -- it's the same way that they talked 14 about that, that they talk about abortion. 15 LINSEY DAVIS: But if I could just get 16 a yes or no. Because your running mate -- J.D. 17 Vance has said that you would veto if it did come 18 to your desk. 19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I didn't 20 discuss it with J.D., in all fairness. J.D. -- 21 and I don't mind if he has a certain view, but I 22 think he was speaking for me, but I really 23 didn't. Look, we don't have to discuss it 24 because she'd never be able to get it just like 25 she couldn't get student loans. They couldn't</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 having a family are being denied IVF treatments. 2 What is happening in our country, working people, 3 working women who are working one or two jobs, 4 who can barely afford childcare as it is, have to 5 travel to another state -- to get on a plane 6 sitting next to strangers -- to go and get the 7 health care she needs. Barely can afford to do 8 it, and what you are putting her through is 9 unconscionable. And the people of America have 10 not -- the, the majority of Americans believe in 11 a woman's right to make decisions about her own 12 body. And that is why in every state where this 13 issue has been on the ballot, in red and blue 14 states both, the people of America have voted for 15 freedom. 16 LINSEY DAVIS: Vice President Harris -- 17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Excuse me, I 18 have to respond. Another lie. It's another lie. 19 I have been a leader on IVF which is 20 fertilization. The IVF -- I have been a leader. 21 In fact, when they got a very negative decision 22 on IVF from the Alabama courts, I saw the people 23 of Alabama and the legislature two days later 24 voted it in. I've been a leader on it. They 25 know that and everybody else knows it. I have</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p>
<p>1 get -- they didn't even come close to getting 2 student loans. They didn't even come close to 3 getting student loans. They taunted young people 4 -- and a lot of other people that had loans. 5 They can never get this approved. So, it doesn't 6 matter what she says about going to Congress. 7 Wonderful. Let's go to Congress. Do it. But 8 the fact is that for years they wanted to get it 9 out of Congress and out of the federal government 10 and we did something that everybody said couldn't 11 be done. And now you have a vote of the people 12 on abortion. 13 LINSEY DAVIS: Vice President Harris, I 14 want to give you your time to respond. But I do 15 want to ask, would you support any restrictions 16 on a woman's right to an abortion? 17 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: I 18 absolutely support reinstating the protections of 19 Roe v. Wade. And as you rightly mentioned, 20 nowhere in America is a woman carrying a 21 pregnancy to term and, and, and asking for an 22 abortion. That is not happening. It's insulting 23 to the women of America. And understand what has 24 been happening under Donald Trump's abortion 25 bans. Couples who pray and, and, and dream of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p>	<p>1 been a leader on fertilization, IVF. And the 2 other thing, they -- you should ask, will she 3 allow abortion in the eighth month, ninth month, 4 seventh month? 5 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Come on. 6 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Would you do 7 that? Why don't you ask her that question -- 8 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Why, why 9 don't you answer the question would you veto -- 10 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: That's the 11 problem. Because under Roe v. Wade. 12 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Answer 13 the question, would you veto -- 14 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: You could do 15 abortions in the seventh month, the eighth month, 16 the ninth month -- 17 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: -- 18 that's not true. 19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: And probably 20 after birth. Just look at the governor, former 21 governor of Virginia. The governor of Virginia 22 said we put the baby aside and then we determine 23 what we want to do with the baby. 24 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump, thank 25 you.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>

<p>1 DAVID MUIR: We're going to turn now to 2 immigration and border security. We know it's an 3 issue that's important to Republicans, Democrats, 4 voters across the board in this country. Vice 5 President Harris, you were tasked by President 6 Biden with getting to the root causes of 7 migration from Central America. We know that 8 illegal border crossings reached a record high in 9 the Biden Administration. This past June, 10 President Biden imposed tough new asylum 11 restrictions. We know the numbers since then 12 have dropped significantly. But my question to 13 you tonight is why did the administration wait 14 until six months before the election to act and 15 would you have done anything differently from 16 President Biden on this?</p> <p>17 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: So, I'm 18 the only person on this stage who has prosecuted 19 transnational criminal organizations for the 20 trafficking of guns, drugs, and human beings. 21 And let me say that the United States Congress, 22 including some of the most conservative members 23 of the United States Senate, came up with a 24 border security bill which I supported. And that 25 bill would have put fifteen hundred more border</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 you to attend one of Donald Trump's rallies 2 because it's a really interesting thing to watch. 3 You will see, during the course of his rallies he 4 talks about fictional characters like Hannibal 5 Lecter. He will talk about windmills cause 6 cancer. And what you will also notice is that 7 people start leaving his rallies early out of 8 exhaustion and boredom. And I will tell you, the 9 one thing you will not hear him talk about is 10 you. You will not hear him talk about your 11 needs, your dreams, and your ne -- your desires. 12 And I'll tell you, I believe you ne -- deserve a 13 president who actually puts you first. And I 14 pledge to you that I will.</p> <p>15 DAVID MUIR: Vice President Harris, 16 thank you. President Trump, on that point I want 17 to get your response.</p> <p>18 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I would 19 like to respond.</p> <p>20 DAVID MUIR: Let me just ask, though, 21 why did you try to kill that bill and 22 successfully so? That would have put thousands 23 of additional agents and officers on the border.</p> <p>24 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: First let me 25 respond as to the rallies. She said people start</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p>
<p>1 agents on the border to help those folks who are 2 working' there right now overtime trying to do 3 their job. It would have allowed us to stem the 4 flow of fentanyl coming into the United States. 5 I know there are so many families watching 6 tonight who have been personally affected by the 7 surge of fentanyl in our country. That bill 8 would have put more resources to allow us to 9 prosecute transnational criminal organizations 10 for trafficking in guns, drugs, and human beings. 11 But you know what happened to that bill? Donald 12 Trump got on the phone, called up some folks in 13 Congress, and said kill the bill. And you know 14 why? Because he'd prefer to run on a problem 15 instead of fixing a problem. And understand, 16 this comes at a time where the people of our 17 country actually need a leader who engages in 18 solutions, who actually addresses the problems at 19 hand. But what we have in the former president 20 is someone who would prefer to run on a problem 21 instead of fixing a problem. And I'll tell you 22 something, he's going to talk about immigration a 23 lot tonight even when it's not the subject that 24 is being raised. And I'm going to actually do 25 something really unusual and I'm going to invite</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p>	<p>1 leaving. People don't go to her rallies. 2 There's no reason to go. And the people that do 3 go, she's busing them in and paying them to be 4 there. And then showing them in a different 5 light. So, she can't talk about that. People 6 don't leave my rallies. We have the biggest 7 rallies, the most incredible rallies in the 8 history of politics. That's because people want 9 to take their country back. Our country is being 10 lost. We're a failing nation. And it happened 11 three and a half years ago. And what, what's 12 going on here, you're going to end up in World 13 War 3, just to go on to another subject. What 14 they have done to our country by allowing these 15 millions and millions of people to come into our 16 country. And look at what's happening to the 17 towns all over the United States. And a lotta 18 towns don't want to talk -- not going to be 19 Aurora or Springfield. A lot of towns don't want 20 to talk about it because they're so embarrassed 21 by it. In Springfield, they're eating the dogs. 22 The people that came in. They're eating the 23 cats. They're eating -- they're eating the pets 24 of the people that live there. And this is 25 what's happening in our country. And it's a</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 29</p>

<p>1 shame. As far as rallies are concerned, as far 2 as -- the reason they go is they like what I say. 3 They want to bring our country back. They want 4 to make America great again. It's a very simple 5 phrase. Make America great again. She's 6 destroying this country. And if she becomes 7 President, this country doesn't have a chance of 8 success. Not only success. We'll end up being 9 Venezuela on steroids.</p> <p>10 DAVID MUIR: I just want to clarify 11 here, you bring up Springfield, Ohio. And ABC 12 News did reach out to the city manager there. He 13 told us there have been no credible reports of 14 specific claims of pets being harmed, injured, or 15 abused by individuals within the immigrant 16 community --</p> <p>17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I've 18 seen people on television --</p> <p>19 DAVID MUIR: Let me just say here this 20 --</p> <p>21 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- the people 22 on television say my dog was taken and used for 23 food. So maybe he said that and maybe that's a 24 good thing to say for a city manager.</p> <p>25 DAVID MUIR: -- I'm not taking this</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 United States. His former National Security 2 Adviser has said he is dangerous and unfit. His 3 former Secretary of Defense has said the nation, 4 the republic would never survive another Trump 5 term. And when we listen to this kind of 6 rhetoric, when the issues that affect the 7 American people are not being addressed, I think 8 the choice is clear in this election.</p> <p>9 DAVID MUIR: President Trump, I'll give 10 you a quick minute to respond.</p> <p>11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. Thank 12 you. Because when I hear that -- see, I'm a 13 different kind of a person. I fired most of 14 those people. Not so graciously. They did bad 15 things or a bad job. I fired them. They never 16 fired one person. They didn't fire anybody 17 having to do with Afghanistan and the Taliban and 18 the 13 people who's, who's -- were just killed, 19 viciously and violently killed, and I got to know 20 the parents and the family. They should have 21 fired all those Generals, all those top people 22 because that was one of the most incompetently 23 handled situations anybody has ever seen. So, 24 when somebody does a bad job, I fire them. And 25 you take a guy like Esper. He was no good, I</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p>
<p>1 from television. I'm taking it from the city 2 manager --</p> <p>3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- but the 4 people on television say their dog was eaten by 5 the people that went there.</p> <p>6 DAVID MUIR: Again, the Springfield 7 city manager says there's no evidence of that.</p> <p>8 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- we'll find 9 out --</p> <p>10 DAVID MUIR: -- Vice President Harris, 11 I'll let you respond to the rest of what you 12 heard.</p> <p>13 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Talk 14 about extreme. You know, I -- this is I think, 15 one of the reasons why in this election I 16 actually have the endorsement of 200 Republicans 17 who have formally worked with President Bush, 18 Mitt Romney, and John McCain including the 19 endorsement of former Vice President Dick Cheney 20 and Congressman Liz Cheney. And if you want 21 to really know the inside track on who the former 22 President is, if he didn't make it clear already, 23 just ask people who have worked with him. His 24 former Chief of Staff, a four-star general, has 25 said he has contempt for the Constitution of the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p>	<p>1 fired him. So, he writes a book. Another one 2 writes a book. Because with me they can write 3 books. With nobody else can they. But they have 4 done such a poor job. And they never fire 5 anybody. Look at the economy. Look how -- look 6 at the inflation. They didn't fire any of their 7 economists. They have the same people. That's a 8 good way not to have books written about you.</p> <p>9 But, just to finish, I got more votes than any 10 Republican in history by far. In fact, I got 11 more votes than any President, sitting President 12 in history by far.</p> <p>13 DAVID MUIR: Let me continue on 14 immigration. It was what you wanted to talk 15 about earlier. So, let's get back to your 16 deportation proposal that the Vice President has 17 reacted to as well. President Trump, you called 18 this the largest domestic deportation operation 19 in the history of our country. You say you would 20 use the National Guard. You say if things get 21 out of control, you'd have no problem using the 22 U.S. military.</p> <p>23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: With local 24 police.</p> <p>25 DAVID MUIR: You also said you would</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p>

<p>1 use local police. How would you deport 11 2 million undocumented immigrants? I know you 3 believe that number is much higher. Take us 4 through this. What does this look like? Will 5 authorities be going door to door in this 6 country?</p> <p>7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. It is 8 much higher, because of them. They allowed 9 criminals. Many, many, millions of criminals. 10 They allowed terrorists. They allowed common 11 street criminals. They allowed people to come 12 in, drug dealers, to come into our country, and 13 they're now in the United States. And told by 14 their countries like Venezuela don't ever come 15 back or we're going to kill you. Do you know 16 that crime in Venezuela and crime in countries 17 all over the world is way down? You know why? 18 Because they've taken their criminals off the 19 street, and they've given them to her to put into 20 our country. And this will be one of the 21 greatest mistakes in history for them to allow -- 22 and I think they probably did it because they 23 think they're going to get votes. But it's not 24 worth it. Because they're -- they're destroying 25 the fabric of our country by what they've done.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 think this is so rich. Coming from someone who 2 has been prosecuted for national security crimes, 3 economic crimes, election interference, has been 4 found liable for sexual assault, and his next big 5 court appearance is in November at his own 6 criminal sentencing. And let's be clear where 7 each person stands on the issue of what is 8 important about respect for the rule of law and 9 respect for law enforcement. The former Vice 10 President called for defunding, federal law 11 enforcement, 45,000 agents, get this, on the day 12 after he was arraigned on 34 felony counts. So, 13 let's talk about what is important in this race. 14 It is important that we move forward, that we 15 turn the page on this same old tired rhetoric. 16 And address the needs of the American people, 17 address what we need to do about the housing 18 shortage, which I have a plan for. Address what 19 we must do to support our small businesses. 20 Address bringing down the price of groceries. 21 But frankly, the American people are exhausted 22 with the same old tired playbook.</p> <p>23 DAVID MUIR: Vice President Harris, 24 thank you.</p> <p>25 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Excuse me.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 36</p>
<p>1 There's never been anything done like this at 2 all. They've destroyed the fabric of our 3 country. Millions of people let in. And all 4 over the world crime is down. All over the world 5 except here. Crime here is up and through the 6 roof. Despite their fraudulent statements that 7 they made. Crime in this country is through the 8 roof. And we have a new form of crime. It's 9 called migrant crime. And it's happening at 10 levels that nobody thought possible.</p> <p>11 DAVID MUIR: President Trump, as you 12 know, the FBI says overall violent crime is 13 actually coming down in this country, but Vice 14 President Harris, I'll give you --</p> <p>15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- excuse me, 16 the FBI defraud -- they were defrauding 17 statements. They, they didn't include the worst 18 cities. They didn't include the cities with the 19 worst crime. It was a, a fraud. Just like their 20 number of 818,000 jobs that they said they 21 created turned out to be a fraud.</p> <p>22 DAVID MUIR: President Trump, thank 23 you. I'll let you respond, Vice President 24 Harris.</p> <p>25 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Well, I</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 35</p>	<p>1 Every one of those cases was started by them 2 against their political opponent. And I'm 3 winning most of them and I will win the rest on 4 appeal. And you saw that with the decision that 5 came down just recently from the Supreme Court. 6 I'm winning most of them. But those are cases, 7 it's called weaponization. Never happened in 8 this country. They weaponized the Justice 9 Department. Every one of those cases was 10 involved with the DOJ, from Atlanta and Fani 11 Willis -- to, to the Attorney General of New York 12 and the D.A. In New York. Every one of those 13 cases. And then they say, "Oh, he was -- he's a 14 criminal." They're the ones that made them go 15 after me. By the way, Joe Biden was found 16 essentially guilty on the documents case. And 17 what happened in my documents case? They said 18 "Oh, that's the toughest of them all." A 19 complete and total victory. Two months ago, it 20 was thrown out. It's weaponization. And they 21 used it. And it's never happened in this 22 country. They used it to try and win an 23 election. They're fake cases.</p> <p>24 DAVID MUIR: President Trump, thank 25 you. A really quick response here, Vice</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p>

<p>1 President Harris, on this notion of weaponization 2 of the Justice Department.</p> <p>3 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Well, 4 let's talk about extreme. And understand the 5 context in which this election in 2024 is taking 6 place. The United States Supreme Court recently 7 ruled that the former President would essentially 8 be immune from any misconduct if he were to enter 9 the White House again. Understand, this is 10 someone who has openly said he would terminate, 11 I'm quoting, terminate the Constitution of the 12 United States. That he would weaponize the 13 Department of Justice against his political 14 enemies. Someone who has openly expressed 15 disdain for members of our military. Understand 16 what it would mean if Donald Trump were back in 17 the White House with no guardrails. Because 18 certainly, we know now the Court won't stop him. 19 We know J.D. Vance is not going to stop him. 20 It's up to the American people to stop him.</p> <p>21 DAVID MUIR: Vice President Harris, 22 thank you. Linsey?</p> <p>23 LINSEY DAVIS: Vice President Harris, 24 in your last run for president --</p> <p>25 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: This is the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 fracking because we're here in Pennsylvania. I 2 made that very clear in 2020. I will not ban 3 fracking. I have not banned fracking as Vice 4 President of the United States. And, in fact, I 5 was the tie-breaking vote on the Inflation 6 Reduction Act, which opened new leases for 7 fracking. My position is that we have got to 8 invest in diverse sources of energy, so we reduce 9 our reliance on foreign oil. We have had the 10 largest increase in domestic oil production in 11 history because of an approach that recognizes 12 that we cannot over-rely on foreign oil.</p> <p>13 As it relates to my values, let me tell 14 you, I grew up a middle-class kid raised by a 15 hard-working mother who worked and saved and was 16 able to buy our first home when I was a teenager. 17 The values I bring to the importance of home 18 ownership, knowing not everybody got handed \$400 19 million on a silver platter and then filed 20 bankruptcy six times, is a value that I bring to 21 my work, to say we are going to work with the 22 private sector and home builders to increase 3 23 million homes, increase by 3 million homes by the 24 end of my first term. My work that is related to 25 having a friend when I was in high school who was</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p>
<p>1 one that weaponized. Not me. She weaponized. I 2 probably took a bullet to the head because of the 3 things that they say about me. They talk about 4 democracy. I'm a threat to democracy. They're 5 the threat to democracy --</p> <p>6 DAVID MUIR: President Trump --</p> <p>7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- with the 8 fake Russia Russia Russia investigation that went 9 nowhere.</p> <p>10 DAVID MUIR: We have a lot to get to. 11 Linsey?</p> <p>12 LINSEY DAVIS: Vice President Harris, 13 in your last run for president you said you 14 wanted to ban fracking. Now you don't. You 15 wanted mandatory government buyback programs for 16 assault weapons. Now your campaign says you 17 don't. You supported decriminalizing border 18 crossings. Now you're taking a harder line. I 19 know you say that your values have not changed. 20 So then why have so many of your policy positions 21 changed?</p> <p>22 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: So, my 23 values have not changed. And I'm going to 24 discuss everyone -- at least every point that 25 you've made. But in particular, let's talk about</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p>	<p>1 sexually assaulted by her stepfather. And my 2 focus then, on protecting women and children from 3 violent crime, is based on a value that is deeply 4 grounded in the importance of standing up for 5 those who are most vulnerable. My work that is 6 about protecting social security and Medicare is 7 based on long-standing work that I have done -- 8 protecting seniors from scams. My values have 9 not changed. And what is important is that there 10 is a president who actually brings values and a 11 perspective that is about lifting people up and 12 not beating people down and name-calling. The 13 true measure of the leader is the leader who 14 actually understands that strength is not in 15 beating people down, it's in lifting people up. 16 I intend to be that president.</p> <p>17 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump, your 18 response.</p> <p>19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, first of 20 all, I wasn't given \$400 million. I wish I was. 21 My father was a Brooklyn builder. Brooklyn, 22 Queens. And a great father and I learned a lot 23 from him. But I was given a fraction of that, a 24 tiny fraction, and I built it into many, many 25 billions of dollars. Many, many billions. And</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p>

<p>1 when people see it, they are even surprised. So, 2 we don't have to talk about that. Fracking? 3 She's been against it for 12 years. Defund the 4 police. She's been against that forever. She 5 gave all that stuff up, very wrongly, very 6 horribly. And everybody's laughing at it, okay? 7 They're all laughing at it. She gave up at least 8 12 and probably 14 or 15 different policies. 9 Like, she was big on defund the police. 10 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: That's 11 not true. 12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: In Minnesota, 13 she went out -- wait a minute. I'm talking now. 14 If you don't mind. Please. Does that sound 15 familiar? 16 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Don't 17 lie. 18 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: She went out - 19 - she went out in Minnesota and wanted to let 20 criminals that killed people, that burned down 21 Minneapolis, she went out and raised money to get 22 them out of jail. She did things that nobody 23 would ever think of. Now she wants to do 24 transgender operations on illegal aliens that are 25 in prison. This is a radical left liberal that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump -- 2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- these are 3 not good things for the environment that she 4 understands. 5 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump, we have 6 a lot of issues that we have to get to. We're 7 out of time. Thank you. 8 DAVID MUIR: Linsey, thank you. We 9 have an election in just 56 days. An -- I want 10 to talk about the peaceful transfer of power, 11 which of course we all know was a cornerstone of 12 our democracy and the role of a president in a 13 moment of crisis. Mr. President, on January 6th 14 you told your supporters to march to the Capitol. 15 You said you would be right there with them. The 16 country and the world saw what played out at the 17 Capitol that day. The officers coming under 18 attack. Aides in the West Wing say you watched 19 it unfold on television off the Oval Office. You 20 did send out tweets, but it was more than two 21 hours before you sent out that video message 22 telling your supporters to go home. Is there 23 anything you regret about what you did on that 24 day? 25 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: You just said</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p>
<p>1 would do this. She wants to confiscate your 2 guns, and she will never allow fracking in 3 Pennsylvania. If she won the election, fracking 4 in Pennsylvania will end on day one. Just to 5 finish one thing, so important in my opinion: So, 6 I got the oil business going like nobody has ever 7 done before. They took, when they took over, 8 they got rid of it, started getting rid of it, 9 and the prices were going up the roof. They 10 immediately let these guys go to where they were. 11 I would have been five times, four times, five 12 times higher because you're talking about 3 1/2 13 years ago. They got it up to where I was because 14 they had no choice. Because the prices of energy 15 were quadrupling and doubling. You saw what 16 happened to gasoline. So, they said let's go 17 back to Trump. But if she won the election, the 18 day after that election, they'll go back to 19 destroying our country and oil will be dead, 20 fossil fuel will be dead. We'll go back to 21 windmills, and we'll go back to solar, where they 22 need a whole desert to get some energy to come 23 out. You ever see a solar plant? By the way, 24 I'm a big fan of solar. But they take 400, 500 25 acres of desert soil --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p>	<p>1 a thing that isn't covered. Peacefully and 2 patriotically, I said during my speech. Not 3 later on. Peacefully and patriotically. And 4 nobody on the other side was killed. Ashli 5 Babbitt was shot by an out-of-control police 6 officer that should have never, ever shot her. 7 It's a disgrace. But we didn't do -- this group 8 of people that have been treated so badly. I 9 ask, what about all the people that are pouring 10 into our country and killing people? That she 11 allowed to pour in. She was the border czar. 12 Remember that. She was the border czar. She 13 doesn't want to be called the border czar because 14 she's embarrassed by the border. In fact, she 15 said at the beginning, I'm surprised you're not 16 talking about the border yet. That's because she 17 knows what a bad job they've done. What about 18 those people? What's -- when are they going to 19 be prosecuted? When are these people from 20 countries all over the world, not just South 21 America, they're coming in from all over the 22 world, David, all over the world. And crime 23 rates are down all over the world because of it - 24 - 25 DAVID MUIR: But let me just ask you --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p>

<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: David. But 2 when are those, David, when are those people 3 going to be prosecuted? When are the people that 4 burned down Minneapolis going to be prosecuted? 5 Or in Seattle? They went into Seattle; they took 6 over a big percentage of the city of Seattle. 7 When are those people going to be prosecuted? 8 DAVID MUIR: But let me just ask you -- 9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: You might ask 10 her that question. 11 DAVID MUIR: You were the President. 12 You were watching it unfold on television. It's 13 a very simple question as we move forward toward 14 another election. Is there anything you regret 15 about what you did on that day? Yes or no. 16 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I had nothing 17 to do with that other than they asked me to make 18 a speech. I showed up for a speech. I said, I 19 think it's going to be big. I went to Nancy 20 Pelosi and the mayor of Washington, D.C. And the 21 mayor put it back in writing, as you know. I 22 said, you know, this is going to be a very big 23 rally or whatever you want to call it. And 24 again, it wasn't done by me. It was done by 25 others. I said I'd like to give you 10,000</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 of people carrying tiki torches, spewing 2 antisemitic hate, and what did the President then 3 at the time say? There were fine people on each 4 side. Let's remember that when it came to the 5 Proud Boys, a militia, the President said, the 6 former President said, "Stand back and stand by." 7 So, for everyone watching who remembers what 8 January 6th was, I say we don't have to go back. 9 Let's not go back. We're not going back. It's 10 time to turn the page. And if that was a bridge 11 too far for you, well, there is a place in our 12 campaign for you. To stand for country. To 13 stand for our democracy. To stand for rule of 14 law. And to end the chaos. And to end the 15 approach that is about attacking the foundations 16 of our democracy because you don't like the 17 outcome. And be clear on that point. Donald 18 Trump the candidate has said in this election 19 there will be a bloodbath if this -- and the 20 outcome of this election is not to his liking. 21 Let's turn the page on this. Let's not go back. 22 Let's chart a course for the future and not go 23 backwards to the past. 24 DAVID MUIR: Let me just follow up here 25 --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p>
<p>1 National Guard or soldiers. They rejected me. 2 Nancy Pelosi rejected me. It was just two weeks 3 ago; her daughter has a tape of her saying she is 4 fully responsible for what happened. They want 5 to get rid of that tape. It would have never 6 happened if Nancy Pelosi and the mayor of 7 Washington did their jobs. I wasn't responsible 8 for security. Nancy Pelosi was responsible. She 9 didn't do her job. 10 DAVID MUIR: The question was about you 11 as President, not about Former Speaker Pelosi. 12 But I do want Vice President Harris to respond 13 here. 14 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: I was at 15 the Capitol on January 6th. I was the Vice 16 President-Elect. I was also an acting senator. 17 I was there. And on that day, the President of 18 the United States incited a violent mob to attack 19 our nation's Capitol, to desecrate our nation's 20 Capitol. On that day, 140 law enforcement 21 officers were injured. And some died. And 22 understand, the former President has been 23 indicted and impeached for exactly that reason. 24 But this is not an isolated situation. Let's 25 remember Charlottesville, where there was a mob</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p>	<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- I have said 2 blood-bash -- bath. It was a different term, and 3 it was a term that related to energy, because 4 they have destroyed our energy business. That 5 was where bloodbath was. Also, on 6 Charlottesville, that story has been, as you 7 would say, debunked. Laura Ingraham, Sean 8 Hannity, Jesse -- all of these people, they 9 covered it. If they go an extra sentence, they 10 will see it was perfect. It was debunked in 11 almost every newspaper. But they still bring it 12 up, just like they bring 2025 up. They bring all 13 of this stuff up. I ask you this. You talk 14 about the Capitol. Why are we allowing these 15 millions of people to come through on the 16 southern border? How come she's not doing the -- 17 and I'll tell you what I would do. And I would 18 be very proud to do it. I would say we would 19 both leave this debate right now; I'd like to see 20 her go down to Washington, D.C. during this 21 debate because we're wasting a lot of time. Go 22 down to -- because she's been so bad, it's so 23 ridiculous. Go down to Washington, D.C. And let 24 her sign a bill to close up the border. Because 25 they have the right to do it. They don't need</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p>

<p>1 bills. They have the right to do it. The 2 President of the United States, you'll get him 3 out of bed. You'll wake him up at 4:00 in the 4 afternoon -- 5 DAVID MUIR: All right -- 6 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- you'll say 7 come on; come on down to the office, let's sign a 8 bill. If he -- if he signs a bill that the 9 border is closed, all he has to do is say it to 10 the border patrol, who are phenomenal. If they 11 do that, the border is closed. 12 DAVID MUIR: Mr. President -- 13 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- those 14 people are killing many people, unlike J-6. 15 DAVID MUIR: We talked immigration here 16 tonight. I do want to focus on this next issue 17 to both of you. Because it really brings us this 18 into focus. Truth in these times that we're 19 living in. Mr. President, for three and a half 20 years after you lost the 2020 election you 21 repeatedly, falsely claimed that you won, many 22 times saying you won in a landslide. In the past 23 couple of weeks leading up to this debate, you 24 have said, quote, you lost by a whisker, that 25 you, quote, didn't quite make it, that you came</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 speak English. They don't even know what country 2 they're in practically. And these people are 3 trying to get them to vote. And that's why 4 they're allowing them to come into our country. 5 DAVID MUIR: I did watch all of these 6 pieces of video. I didn't detect the sarcasm, 7 "lost by a whisker," "we didn't quite make it," 8 and we should just point out as clarification, 9 and you know this, you, and your allies, 60 cases 10 in front of many judges. Many of them -- 11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No judge 12 looked at it. 13 DAVID MUIR: -- and said there was no 14 widespread fraud. 15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: They said we 16 didn't have standing. That's the other thing. 17 They said we didn't have standing. A 18 technicality. Can you imagine a system where a 19 person in an election doesn't have standing, the 20 President of the United States doesn't have 21 standing? That's how we lost. If you look at 22 the facts, and I'd love to have you -- you'll do 23 a special on it. I'll show you Georgia and I'll 24 show you Wisconsin and I'll show you Pennsylvania 25 and I'll show you -- we have so many facts and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p>
<p>1 up a little bit short. 2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I said that? 3 DAVID MUIR: Are you now acknowledging 4 that you lost in 2020? 5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, I don't 6 acknowledge that at all. 7 DAVID MUIR: But you did say that. 8 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I said that 9 sarcastically. You know that. It was said, oh 10 we lost by a whisker. That was said 11 sarcastically. Look, there's so much proof. All 12 you have to do is look at it. And they should 13 have sent it back to the legislatures for 14 approval. I got almost 75 million votes. The 15 most votes any sitting president has ever gotten. 16 I was told if I got 63, which was what I got in 17 2016, you can't be beaten. The election, people 18 should never be thinking about an election as 19 fraudulent. We need two things. We need walls. 20 We need -- and we have to have it. We have to 21 have borders. And we have to have good 22 elections. 23 Our elections are bad. And a lot of 24 these illegal immigrants coming in, they're 25 trying to get them to vote. They can't even</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p>	<p>1 statistics. But you know what? That doesn't 2 matter. Because we have to solve the problem 3 that we have right now. That's old news. And 4 the problem that we have right now is we have a 5 nation in decline, and they have put it into 6 decline. We have a nation that is dying, David. 7 DAVID MUIR: Mr. President, thank you. 8 Vice President Harris, you heard the President 9 there tonight. He said he didn't say that he 10 lost by a whisker. So, he still believes he did 11 not lose the election that was won by President 12 Biden and yourself. But I do want to ask you 13 about something that's come up in the last couple 14 of days. This was a post from President Trump 15 about this upcoming election just weeks away. He 16 said, "When I win, those people who cheated," and 17 then he lists donors, voters, election officials, 18 he says "Will be prosecuted to the fullest extent 19 of the law, which will include long-term prison 20 sentences." One of your campaign's top lawyers 21 responded saying, "We won't let Donald Trump 22 intimidate us. We won't let him suppress the 23 vote." Is that what you believe he's trying to 24 do here? 25 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Donald</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 53</p>

<p>1 Trump was fired by 81 million people. So, let's 2 be clear about that. And clearly, he is having a 3 very difficult time processing that. But we 4 cannot afford to have a President of the United 5 States who attempts as he did in the past to 6 upend the will of the voters in a free and fair 7 election. And I'm going to tell you that I have 8 traveled the world as Vice President of the 9 United States. And world leaders are laughing at 10 Donald Trump. I have talked with military 11 leaders, some of whom worked with you. And they 12 say you're a disgrace. And when you then talk in 13 this way in a presidential debate and deny what 14 over and over again are court cases you have 15 lost, because you did in fact lose that election, 16 it leads one to believe that perhaps we do not 17 have in the candidate to my right the temperament 18 or, or the ability to not be confused about fact. 19 That's deeply troubling. And the American people 20 deserve better.</p> <p>21 DAVID MUIR: I'll give you one minute 22 to respond, Mr. President.</p> <p>23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Okay, let me 24 just tell you about world leaders. Viktor Orban, 25 one of the most respected men -- they call him a</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 votes, and they threw him out of office. And you 2 know what? I'll give you a little secret. He 3 hates her. He can't stand her.</p> <p>4 DAVID MUIR: Mr. President --</p> <p>5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: But he had 14 6 million votes. They threw him out. She got zero 7 votes. And when she ran, she was the first one 8 to leave because she failed. And now she's 9 running. I don't understand it but I'm okay with 10 it--</p> <p>11 DAVID MUIR: Mr. President --</p> <p>12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- because I 13 think we're going to do pretty well.</p> <p>14 DAVID MUIR: Mr. President, your time 15 is up. We've got a lot more to get -- to.</p> <p>16 LINSEY DAVIS: Turning now to the 17 Israel-Hamas war and the hostages who are still 18 being held, Americans among them. Vice President 19 Harris, in December you said, "Israel has a right 20 to defend itself" but you added, "It matters 21 how." Saying, "International humanitarian law 22 must be respected, Israel must do more to protect 23 innocent civilians." You said that nine months 24 ago. Now an estimated 40,000 Palestinians are 25 dead. Nearly 100 hostages remain. Just last</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p>
<p>1 strong man. He's a, he's a tough person. Smart. 2 Prime Minister of Hungary. They said, "Why is 3 the whole world blowing up? Three years ago, it 4 wasn't. Why is it blowing up?" He said, 5 "Because you need Trump back as President. They 6 were afraid of him. China was afraid." And I 7 don't like to use the word afraid but I'm just 8 quoting him. "China was afraid of him. North 9 Korea was afraid of him." Look at what's going 10 on with North Korea, by the way. He said, 11 "Russia was afraid of him." I ended the Nord 12 Stream 2 pipeline and Biden put it back on day 13 one, but he ended the XL pipeline. The XL 14 pipeline in our country. He ended that. But he 15 let the Russians build a pipeline going all over 16 Europe and heading into Germany. The biggest 17 pipeline in the world. Look, Viktor Orban said 18 it. He said the most respected, most feared 19 person is Donald Trump. We had no problems when 20 Trump was President. But when this weak, 21 pathetic man that you saw at a debate just a few 22 months ago that if he weren't in that debate he'd 23 be running instead of her, she got no votes, he 24 got 14 million votes, what you did, you talk 25 about a threat to democracy. He got 14 million</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p>	<p>1 week Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said 2 there's not a deal in the making. President 3 Biden has not been able to break through the 4 stalemate. How would you do it?</p> <p>5 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Well, 6 let's understand how we got here. On Oct. 7, 7 Hamas, a terrorist organization, slaughtered 8 twelve hundred Israelis. Many of them young 9 people who were simply attending a concert. 10 Women were horribly raped. And so absolutely, I 11 said then, I say now, Israel has a right to 12 defend itself. We would. And how it does so 13 matters. Because it is also true, far too many 14 innocent Palestinians have been killed. 15 Children, mothers. What we know is that this war 16 must end. It must when -- end immediately, and 17 the way it will end is we need a cease-fire deal, 18 and we need the hostages out. And so, we will 19 continue to work around the clock on that. Work 20 around the clock also understanding that we must 21 chart a course for a two-state solution. And in 22 that solution, there must be security for the 23 Israeli people and Israel and in equal measure 24 for the Palestinians. But the one thing I will 25 assure you always, I will always give Israel the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p>

<p>1 ability to defend itself, in particular as it 2 rates -- relates to Iran and any threat that Iran 3 and its proxies pose to Israel. But we must have 4 a two-state solution where we can rebuild Gaza, 5 where the Palestinians have security, self- 6 determination, and the dignity they so rightly 7 deserve.</p> <p>8 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump, how 9 would you negotiate with Netanyahu and also Hamas 10 in order to get the hostages out and prevent the 11 killing of more innocent civilians in Gaza?</p> <p>12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: If I were 13 president, it would have never started. If I 14 were president, Russia would have never, ever -- 15 I know Putin very well. He would have never -- 16 and there was no threat of it either, by the way, 17 for four years -- have gone into Ukraine and 18 killed millions of people when you add it up. 19 Far worse than people understand what's going on 20 over there. But when she mentions about Israel 21 all of a sudden -- she hates Israel. She 22 wouldn't even meet with Netanyahu when he went to 23 Congress to make a very important speech. She 24 refused to be there because she was at a sorority 25 party of hers. She wanted to go to the sorority</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p>	<p>1 LINSEY DAVIS: Vice President Harris, 2 he says you hate Israel.</p> <p>3 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Heh, 4 well, that's absolutely not true. I have my 5 entire career and life supported Israel and the 6 Israeli people. He knows that. He's trying to 7 again divide and and distract from the reality, 8 which is it is very well known that Donald Trump 9 is weak and wrong on national security and 10 foreign policy. It is well known that he admires 11 dictators, wants to be a dictator on day one 12 according to himself. It is well known that he 13 said of Putin that he can do whatever the hell he 14 wants and go into Ukraine. It is well known that 15 he said when Russia went into Ukraine it was 16 brilliant. It is well known he exchanged love 17 letters with Kim Jong Un. And it is absolutely 18 well known that these dictators and autocrats are 19 rooting for you to be president again because 20 they're so clear, they can manipulate you with 21 flattery and favors. And that is why so many 22 military leaders who you have worked with have 23 told me you are a disgrace. That is why we 24 understand that we have to have a president who 25 is not consistently weak and wrong on national</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p>
<p>1 party. She hates Israel. If she's president, I 2 believe that Israel will not exist within two 3 years from now. And I've been pretty good at 4 predictions. And I hope I'm wrong about that 5 one. She hates Israel. At the same time in her 6 own way, she hates the Arab population because 7 the whole place is going to get blown up, Arabs, 8 Jewish people, Israel. Israel will be gone. It 9 would have never happened. Iran was broke under 10 Donald Trump. Now Iran has \$300 billion because 11 they took off all the sanctions that I had. Iran 12 had no money for Hamas or Hezbollah or any of the 13 28 different spheres of terror. And they are 14 spheres of terror. Horrible terror. They had no 15 money. It was a big story, and you know it. You 16 covered it. Very well, actually. They had no 17 money for terror. They were broke. Now they're 18 a rich nation. And now what they're doing is 19 spreading that money around. Look at what's 20 happening with the Houthis and Yemen. Look at 21 what's going on in the Middle East. This would 22 have never happened. I will get that settled and 23 fast. And I'll get the war with Ukraine and 24 Russia ended. If I'm President-Elect, I'll get 25 it done before even becoming President.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p>	<p>1 security --</p> <p>2 LINSEY DAVIS: Vice President Harris --</p> <p>3 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: -- 4 including the importance of upholding and 5 respecting in highest regard our military.</p> <p>6 LINSEY DAVIS: Vice President Harris, 7 thank you.</p> <p>8 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: They're the 9 ones -- and she's the one that caused it -- 10 that's weak on national security by allowing 11 every nation last month for the year, 168 12 different countries sending people into our 13 country. Their crime rates are way down. Putin 14 endorsed her last week. Said, "I hope she wins." 15 And I think he meant it. Because what he's 16 gotten away with is absolutely incredible. It 17 wouldn't have happened with me. The leaders of 18 other countries think that they're weak and 19 incompetent. And they are. They're grossly 20 incompetent. And I just ask one question. Why 21 does Biden go in and kill the Keystone pipeline 22 and approve the single biggest deal that Russia's 23 ever made, Nord Stream 2, the biggest pipeline 24 anywhere in the world going to Germany and all 25 over Europe? Because they're weak and they're</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 61</p>

<p>1 ineffective. And Biden, by the way --</p> <p>2 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump --</p> <p>3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- gets paid a</p> <p>4 lot of money --</p> <p>5 LINSEY DAVIS: Thank you. We have a</p> <p>6 lot of issues to get to.</p> <p>7 DAVID MUIR: We'll be right back with</p> <p>8 much more of this historic ABC News presidential</p> <p>9 debate from the National Constitution Center</p> <p>10 right here in Philadelphia. Back in a moment.</p> <p>11 Welcome back to this historic ABC news</p> <p>12 presidential debate tonight. We're going to</p> <p>13 continue here, and I want to turn to the war in</p> <p>14 Ukraine. We're now two and a half years into</p> <p>15 this conflict. Mr. President, it has been the</p> <p>16 position of the Biden Administration that we must</p> <p>17 defend Ukraine from Russia, from Vladimir Putin,</p> <p>18 to defend their sovereignty, their democracy,</p> <p>19 that it's in America's best interest to do so,</p> <p>20 arguing that if Putin wins, he may be emboldened</p> <p>21 to move even further into other countries. You</p> <p>22 have said you would solve this war in 24 hours.</p> <p>23 You said so just before the break tonight. How</p> <p>24 exactly would you do that? And I want to ask you</p> <p>25 a very simple question tonight. Do you want</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 For what reason? He hasn't even made a phone</p> <p>2 call in two years to Putin. Hasn't spoken to</p> <p>3 anybody. They don't even try and get it. That</p> <p>4 is a war that's dying to be settled. I will get</p> <p>5 it settled before I even become President. If I</p> <p>6 win, when I'm President-Elect, and what I'll do</p> <p>7 is I'll speak to one, I'll speak to the other,</p> <p>8 I'll get them together. That war would have</p> <p>9 never happened. And in fact, when I saw Putin</p> <p>10 after I left, unfortunately left because our --</p> <p>11 our country has gone to hell, but after I left</p> <p>12 when I saw him building up soldiers, he did it</p> <p>13 after I left, I said oh, he must be negotiating.</p> <p>14 It must be a good strong point of negotiation.</p> <p>15 Well, it wasn't because Biden had no idea how to</p> <p>16 talk to him. He had no idea how to stop it. And</p> <p>17 now you have millions of people dead and it's</p> <p>18 only getting worse, and it could lead to World</p> <p>19 War 3. Don't kid yourself, David. We're playing</p> <p>20 with World War 3. And we have a President that</p> <p>21 we don't even know if he's -- where is our</p> <p>22 President? We don't even know if he's a</p> <p>23 President.</p> <p>24 DAVID MUIR: And just to clarify here.</p> <p>25 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: They threw him</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 64</p>
<p>1 Ukraine to win this war?</p> <p>2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I want the war</p> <p>3 to stop. I want to save lives that are being</p> <p>4 uselessly -- people being killed by the millions.</p> <p>5 It's the millions. It's so much worse than the</p> <p>6 numbers that you're getting, which are fake</p> <p>7 numbers. Look, we're in for 250 billion or more,</p> <p>8 because they don't ask Europe, which is a much</p> <p>9 bigger beneficiary to getting this thing done</p> <p>10 than we are. They're in for \$150 billion less</p> <p>11 because Biden and you don't have the courage to</p> <p>12 ask Europe like I did with NATO. They paid</p> <p>13 billions and billions, hundreds of billions of</p> <p>14 dollars when I said either you pay up or we're</p> <p>15 not going to protect you anymore. So that may be</p> <p>16 one of the reasons they don't like me as much as</p> <p>17 they like weak people. But you take a look at</p> <p>18 what's happening. We're in for 250 to 275</p> <p>19 billion. They're into 100 to 150. They should</p> <p>20 be forced to equalize. With that being said, I</p> <p>21 want to get the war settled. I know Zelenskyy</p> <p>22 very well, and I know Putin very well. I have a</p> <p>23 good relationship. And they respect your</p> <p>24 President. Okay? They respect me. They don't</p> <p>25 respect Biden. How would you respect him? Why?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 63</p>	<p>1 out of a campaign like a dog. We don't even</p> <p>2 know, is he our President? But we have a</p> <p>3 President --</p> <p>4 DAVID MUIR: Mr. President,</p> <p>5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- that</p> <p>6 doesn't know he's alive.</p> <p>7 DAVID MUIR: Your time is up. Just to</p> <p>8 clarify the question, do you believe it's in the</p> <p>9 U.S. best interests for Ukraine to win this war?</p> <p>10 Yes or no?</p> <p>11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I think it's</p> <p>12 in the U.S. best interest to get this war</p> <p>13 finished and f -- just get it done.</p> <p>14 DAVID MUIR: All right.</p> <p>15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Negotiate a</p> <p>16 deal. Because we have to stop all of these human</p> <p>17 lives from being destroyed.</p> <p>18 DAVID MUIR: I want to take this to</p> <p>19 Vice President Harris. I want to get your</p> <p>20 thoughts on support for Ukraine in this moment.</p> <p>21 But also, as Commander-in-Chief, if elected, how</p> <p>22 would you deal with Vladimir Putin, and would it</p> <p>23 be any different from what we're seeing from</p> <p>24 President Biden?</p> <p>25 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Well,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 65</p>

<p>1 first of all, it's important to remind the former 2 President you're not running' against Joe Biden, 3 you're running' against me. I believe the reason 4 that Donald Trump says that this war would be 5 over within 24 hours is because he would just 6 give it up. And that's not who we are as 7 Americans. Let's understand what happened here. 8 I actually met with Zelenskyy a few days before 9 Russia invaded, tried through force to change 10 territorial boundaries, to defy one of the most 11 important international rules and norms, which is 12 the importance of sovereignty and territorial 13 integrity. And I met with President Zelenskyy. 14 I shared with him American intelligence about how 15 he could defend himself. Days later I went to 16 NATO's eastern flank, to Poland and Romania. And 17 through the work that I and others did, we 18 brought 50 countries together to support Ukraine 19 in its righteous defense. And because of our 20 support, because of the air defense, the 21 ammunition, the artillery, the javelins, the 22 Abrams tanks that we have provided, Ukraine 23 stands as an independent and free country. If 24 Donald Trump were President, Putin would be 25 sitting in Kyiv right now. And understand what</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 66</p>	<p>1 DAVID MUIR: Please I'll give you a 2 minute here. 3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Putin would be 4 sitting in Moscow, and he wouldn't have lost 5 300,000 men and women. But he would have been 6 sitting in Moscow. 7 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: 8 (Indiscernible). 9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Quiet, please. 10 He would have been sitting in Moscow much happier 11 than he is right now. But eventually, you know, 12 he's got a thing that other people don't have. 13 He's got nuclear weapons. They don't ever talk 14 about that. He's got nuclear weapons. Nobody 15 ever thinks about that. And eventually, maybe 16 he'll use them. Maybe he hasn't been that 17 threatening. But he does have that. Something 18 we don't even like to talk about. Nobody likes 19 to talk about it. But just so you understand, 20 they sent her to negotiate peace before this war 21 started. Three days later he went in, and he 22 started the war because everything they said was 23 weak and stupid. They said the wrong things. 24 That war should have never started. She was the 25 emissary. They sent her in to negotiate with</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 68</p>
<p>1 that would mean. Because Putin's agenda is not 2 just about Ukraine. Understand why the European 3 allies and our NATO allies are so thankful that 4 you are no longer President and that we 5 understand the importance of the greatest 6 military alliance the world has ever known, which 7 is NATO. And what we have done to preserve the 8 ability of Zelenskyy and the Ukrainians to fight 9 for their Independence. Otherwise, Putin would 10 be sitting in Kyiv with his eyes on the rest of 11 Europe. Starting with Poland. And why don't you 12 tell the 800,000 Polish Americans right here in 13 Pennsylvania how quickly you would give up, for 14 the sake of favor and what you think is a 15 friendship, with what is known to be a dictator 16 who would eat you for lunch. 17 DAVID MUIR: Vice President Harris 18 Thank you. We heard from both of you on Ukraine 19 tonight. Afghanistan came up in the last hour -- 20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I have to 21 respond to her. 22 DAVID MUIR: -- I wanted her to respond 23 to something you said earlier. 24 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I have to 25 respond.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 67</p>	<p>1 Zelenskyy and Putin. And she did and the war 2 started three days later -- 3 DAVID MUIR: Vice President -- 4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- and that's 5 the kind of talent we have with her. She's worse 6 than Biden. In my opinion, I think he's the 7 worst president in the history of our country. 8 She goes down as the worst Vice President in the 9 history of our country. But let me tell you 10 something. She is a horrible negotiator. They 11 sent her in to negotiate. As soon as they left 12 Putin did the invasion. 13 DAVID MUIR: President Trump, thank 14 you. You did bring up something, you said she 15 went to negotiate with Vladimir Putin. Vice 16 President Harris, have you ever met Vladimir 17 Putin, can you clarify tonight? 18 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Yet 19 again, I said it at the beginning of this debate, 20 you're going to hear a bunch of lies coming from 21 this fella. And that is another one. When I 22 went to meet with President Zelenskyy, I've now 23 met with him over five times. The reality is, it 24 has been about standing as America always should, 25 as a leader upholding international rules and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 69</p>

<p>1 norms. As a leader who shows strength, 2 understanding that the alliances we have around 3 the world are dependent on our ability to look 4 out for our friends and not favor our enemies, 5 because you adore strongmen instead of caring 6 about democracy. And that is very much what is 7 at stake here. The President of the United 8 States is Commander-in-Chief. And the American 9 people have a right to rely on a president who 10 understands the significance of America's role 11 and responsibility in terms of ensuring that 12 there is stability and ensuring we stand up for 13 our principles and not sell them for the -- for 14 the benefit of personal flattery.</p> <p>15 DAVID MUIR: We've talked about Ukraine 16 and Vladimir Putin. I do want to talk about 17 Afghanistan. It came up in the first hour of 18 this debate.</p> <p>19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: David, one 20 thing.</p> <p>21 DAVID MUIR: I, I want to move on to 22 Afghanistan --</p> <p>23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Secretary 24 General Stoltenberg said Trump did the most 25 amazing thing I've ever seen, he got these</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 70</p>	<p>1 And as a result, America's taxpayers are not 2 paying the \$300 million a day we were paying for 3 that endless war. And as of today, there is not 4 one member of the United States military who is 5 in active duty in a combat zone in any war zone 6 around the world -- the first time this century. 7 But let's understand how we got to where we are. 8 Donald Trump when he was President negotiated one 9 of the weakest deals you can imagine. He calls 10 himself a dealmaker. Even his National Security 11 Adviser said it was a weak, terrible deal. And 12 here's how it went down. He bypassed the Afghan 13 government. He negotiated directly with a 14 terrorist organization called the Taliban. The 15 negotiation involved the Taliban getting 5,000 16 terrorists, Taliban terrorists, released.</p> <p>17 And get this -- no, get this. And the 18 President at the time invited the Taliban to Camp 19 David. A place of storied significance for us as 20 Americans, a place where we honor the importance 21 of American diplomacy, where we invite and 22 receive respected world leaders. And this former 23 President as President invited them to Camp David 24 because he does not again appreciate the role and 25 responsibility of the President of the United</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 72</p>
<p>1 countries, the 28 countries at the time, to pay 2 up. He said I've never seen -- he's the head of 3 NATO. He said I've never seen -- for years we 4 were paying almost all of NATO. We were being 5 ripped off by European nations both on trade and 6 on NATO. I got them to pay up by saying one of 7 the statements you made before, if you don't pay, 8 we're not going to protect you.</p> <p>9 DAVID MUIR: President Trump --</p> <p>10 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Otherwise, we 11 would've never gotten it. He said it was one of 12 the most incredible jobs that he's ever seen 13 done.</p> <p>14 DAVID MUIR: Thank you. I want to turn 15 to Afghanistan. It came up in the first hour of 16 the debate, and we witnessed a, a poignant moment 17 today on Capitol Hill honoring the soldiers who 18 died in the chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan. 19 I do want to ask the Vice President, do you 20 believe you bear any responsibility in the way 21 that withdrawal played out?</p> <p>22 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Well, I 23 will tell you, I agreed with President Biden's 24 decision to pull out of Afghanistan. Four 25 presidents said they would, and Joe Biden did.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 71</p>	<p>1 States to be Commander in Chief with a level of 2 respect. And this gets back to the point of how 3 he has consistently disparaged and demeaned 4 members of our military, fallen soldiers, and the 5 work that we must do to uphold the strength and 6 the respect of the United States of America 7 around the world.</p> <p>8 DAVID MUIR: Vice President Harris, 9 thank you. President Trump, your response to her 10 saying that you began the negotiations with the 11 Taliban.</p> <p>12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah, thank 13 you. So, if you take a look at that period of 14 time, the Taliban was killing our soldiers, a lot 15 of them, with snipers. And I got involved with 16 the Taliban because the Taliban was doing the 17 killing. That's the fighting force within 18 Afghanistan. They don't bother doing that 19 because you know, they deal with the wrong people 20 all the time. But I got involved. And Abdul is 21 the head of the Taliban. He is still the head of 22 the Taliban. And I told Abdul don't do it 23 anymore, you do it anymore you're going to have 24 problems. And he said, "Why do you send me a 25 picture of my house?" I said, "You're going to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 73</p>

<p>1 have to figure that out, Abdul." And for 18 2 months we had nobody killed. We did have an 3 agreement negotiated by Mike Pompeo. It was a 4 very good agreement. The reason it was good, it 5 was -- we were getting out. We would have been 6 out faster than them, but we wouldn't have lost 7 the soldiers. We wouldn't have left many 8 Americans behind. And we wouldn't have left -- 9 we wouldn't have left \$85 billion worth of brand- 10 new beautiful military equipment behind. And 11 just to finish, they blew it. The agreement said 12 you have to do this, this, this, this, this, and 13 they didn't do it. They didn't do it. The 14 agreement was -- was terminated by us because 15 they didn't do what they were supposed to do. 16 DAVID MUIR: I want to move on. 17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: And these 18 people did the worst withdrawal, and in my 19 opinion, the most embarrassing moment in the 20 history of our country. And by the way, that's 21 why Russia attacked Ukraine. Because they saw 22 how incompetent she and her boss are. 23 DAVID MUIR: President Trump, thank 24 you. I want to move on now to race and politics 25 in this country. Mr. President, you recently</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 74</p>	<p>1 who has consistently over the course of his 2 career attempted to use race to divide the 3 American people. You know, I do believe that the 4 vast majority of us know that we have so much 5 more in common than what separates us. And we 6 don't want this kind of approach that is just 7 constantly trying to divide us, and especially by 8 race. And let's remember how Donald Trump 9 started. He was a, a, a—land, he owned land, he 10 owned buildings, and he was investigated because 11 he refused to rent property to Black families. 12 Let's remember, this is the same individual who 13 took out a full-page ad in The New York Times 14 calling for the execution of five young Black and 15 Latino boys who were innocent, the Central Park 16 Five. Took out a full-page ad calling for their 17 execution. This is the same individual who 18 spread birther lies about the first Black 19 President of the United States. And I think the 20 American people want better than that. Want 21 better than this. Want someone who understands 22 as I do, I travel our country, we see in each 23 other a friend. We see in each other a neighbor. 24 We don't want a leader who is constantly trying 25 to have Americans point their fingers at each</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 76</p>
<p>1 said of Vice President Harris, "I didn't know she 2 was Black until a number of years ago when she 3 happened to turn Black, and now she wants to be 4 known as Black." I want to ask a bigger-picture 5 question here tonight. Why do you believe it's 6 appropriate to weigh in on the racial identity of 7 your opponent? 8 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I don't. And 9 I don't care. I don't care what she is. I don't 10 care. You make a big deal out of something. I 11 couldn't care less. Whatever she wants to be is 12 okay with me. 13 DAVID MUIR: But those were your words. 14 So, I'm asking -- 15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I don't know. 16 I don't know. All I can say is I read where she 17 was not Black -- that she put out. And, I'll say 18 that. And then I read that she was Black. And 19 that's okay. Either one was okay with me. 20 That's up to her. That's up to her. 21 DAVID MUIR: Vice President Harris, 22 your thoughts on this? 23 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: I think 24 it's, I mean honestly, I think it's a tragedy 25 that we have someone who wants to be President</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 75</p>	<p>1 other. I meet with people all the time who tell 2 me "Can we please just have discourse about how 3 we're going to invest in the aspirations and the 4 ambitions and the dreams of the American people?" 5 Knowing that regardless of people's color or the 6 language their grandmother speaks we all have the 7 same dreams and aspirations and want a president 8 who invests in those, not in hate and division. 9 DAVID MUIR: Vice President Harris 10 thank you. Linsey? 11 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump, this is 12 now your third time -- 13 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: This is the 14 most divisive presidency in the history of our 15 country. There's never been anything like it. 16 They're destroying our country. And they come up 17 with things like what she just said, going back 18 many, many years when a lot of people, including 19 Mayor Bloomberg agreed with me on the Central 20 Park Five. They admitted -- they said, they pled 21 guilty. And I said, well, if they pled guilty, 22 they badly hurt a person, killed a person 23 ultimately. And if they pled guilty -- then they 24 pled we're not guilty. But this is a person that 25 has to stretch back years, 40, 50 years ago</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 77</p>

<p>1 because there's nothing now. I built one of the 2 greatest economies in the history of the world 3 and I'm going to build it again. It's going to 4 be bigger, better, and stronger. But they're 5 destroying our economy. They have no idea what a 6 good economy is. Their oil policies -- every 7 single policy -- and remember this. She is 8 Biden. She's trying to get away from Biden. I 9 don't know the gentleman, she says. She is 10 Biden. The worst inflation we've ever had. A 11 horrible economy because inflation has made it so 12 bad. And she can't get away with that. 13 DAVID MUIR: Mr. President, thank you, 14 your time is up. Linsey -- 15 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: I want 16 to respond to that, though. I want to just 17 respond briefly. Clearly, I am not Joe Biden. 18 And I am certainly not Donald Trump. And what I 19 do offer is a new generation of leadership for 20 our country. One who believes in what is 21 possible, one who brings a sense of optimism 22 about what we can do instead of always 23 disparaging the American people. I believe in 24 what we can do to strengthen our small 25 businesses, which is why I have a plan. Let's</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 78</p>	<p>1 please? 2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: She has a plan 3 to defund the police. She has a plan -- plan to 4 confiscate everybody's gun. 5 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump, we do 6 have to -- 7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: She has a plan 8 to not allow fracking in Pennsylvania or anywhere 9 else. That's what her plan is until just 10 recently. 11 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump, 12 President Trump. 13 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: The 14 former president has said something twice and I 15 need to respond too. I just need to respond one 16 time to what he has said multiple times. 17 LINSEY DAVIS: I'm sorry, we're going 18 to move on, Vice President Harris. 19 This is now your third time running for 20 president. You have long vowed to repeal and 21 replace the Affordable Care Act, also known as 22 Obamacare. You have failed to accomplish that. 23 You now say you're going to keep Obamacare. 24 Quote, unless we can do something much better. 25 Last month you said, quote, we're working on it.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 80</p>
<p>1 talk about our plans. And let's compare the 2 plans. I have a plan to give startup businesses 3 \$50,000 tax deduction, to pursue their ambitions, 4 their innovation, their ideas, their hard work. 5 I have a plan. \$6,000 for young families for the 6 first year of your child's life. To help you in 7 that most critical stage of your child's 8 development. I have a plan that is about 9 allowing people to be able to pursue what has 10 been fleeting in terms of the American dream, by 11 offering a help with down payment of \$25,000, 12 down payment assistance for first-time home 13 buyers. That's the kind of conversation I 14 believe, David, that people really want tonight 15 as opposed to a conversation that is constantly 16 about belittling and name-calling. Let's turn 17 the page and move forward. 18 DAVID MUIR: Vice President Harris, 19 thank you. Let's turn to policy -- let's turn 20 back to policy. 21 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump, we have 22 to move on. President Trump -- 23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: She is 24 destroying our country. 25 DAVID MUIR: Let's turn to policy,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 79</p>	<p>1 So tonight, nine years after you first started 2 running, do you have a plan, and can you tell us 3 what it is? 4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Obamacare was 5 lousy health care. Always was. It's not very 6 good today. And what I said, that if we come up 7 with something, and we are working on things, 8 we're going to do it and we're going to replace 9 it. But remember this. I inherited Obamacare 10 because Democrats wouldn't change it. They 11 wouldn't vote for it. They were unanimous. They 12 wouldn't vote to change it. If they would have 13 done that, we would have had a much better plan 14 than Obamacare. But the Democrats came up, they 15 wouldn't vote for it. I had a choice to make 16 when I was President, do I save it and make it as 17 good as it can be? Never going to be great. Or 18 do I let it rot? And I felt I had an obligation, 19 even though politically it would have been good 20 to just let it rot and let it go away. I decided 21 -- and I told my people, the top people, and 22 they're very good people -- I have a lot of good 23 people in this -- that administration. We read 24 about the bad ones. We had some real bad ones 25 too. And so do they. They have really bad ones.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 81</p>

<p>1 The difference is they don't get rid of them. 2 But let me just explain. I had a choice to make 3 do I save it and make it as good as it can be, or 4 do I let it rot? And I saved it. I did the 5 right thing. But it's still never going to be 6 great. And it's too expensive for people. And 7 what we will do is we're looking at different 8 plans. If we can come up with a plan that's 9 going to cost our people, our population, less 10 money and be better health care than Obamacare, 11 then I would absolutely do it. But until then, 12 I'd run it as good as it can be run. 13 LINSEY DAVIS: So just a yes or no, you 14 still do not have a plan? 15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I have 16 concepts of a plan. I'm not President right now. 17 But if we come up with something I would only 18 change it if we come up with something that's 19 better and less expensive. And there are 20 concepts and options we we have to do that. And 21 you'll be hearing about it in the not-too-distant 22 future. 23 LINSEY DAVIS: Vice president Harris, 24 in 2017 you supported Bernie Sanders' proposal to 25 do away with private insurance and create a</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 82</p>	<p>1 got caught, he was an American hero. The late 2 great John McCain, I will never forget that 3 night. Walked onto the Senate floor and said no, 4 you don't. No, you don't. No, you don't get rid 5 of the Affordable Care Act. You have no plan. 6 And what the Affordable Care Act has done is 7 eliminate the ability of insurance companies to 8 deny people with pre-existing conditions. I 9 don't have to tell the people watching tonight, 10 you remember what that was like? Remember when 11 an insurance company could deny if a child had 12 asthma, if someone was a breast cancer survivor, 13 if a grandparent had diabetes? And thankfully, 14 as I've been Vice President and we over the last 15 four years have strengthened the Affordable Care 16 Act, we have allowed for the first time Medicare 17 to negotiate drug prices on behalf of you the 18 American people. Donald Trump said he was going 19 to allow Medicare to negotiate dr, drug prices. 20 He never did. We did. And now we have capped 21 the cost of insulin at \$35 a month. Since I've 22 been Vice President, we have capped the cost of 23 prescription medication for seniors at \$2,000 a 24 year. And when I am President, we will do that 25 for all people understanding that the value I</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 84</p>
<p>1 government-run health care system. Two years 2 later you proposed a plan that included a private 3 insurance option. What is your plan today? 4 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Well, 5 first of all, I absolutely support and over the 6 last four years as Vice President, private health 7 care options. But what we need to do is maintain 8 and grow the Affordable Care Act. But I, I'll 9 get to that, Linsey. I just need to respond to a 10 previous point that the former President has 11 made. I've made very clear my position on 12 fracking. And then this business about taking 13 everyone's guns away. Tim Walz and I are both 14 gun owners. We're not taking anybody's guns 15 away. So, stop with the continuous lying about 16 this stuff. As it relates to the Affordable Care 17 Act, understand, just look at the history to know 18 where people stand. When Donald Trump was 19 president, 60 times he tried to get rid of the 20 Affordable Care Act. 60 times. I was a Senator 21 at the time. When, I will never forget the early 22 morning hours when it was up for a vote in the 23 United States Senate and the late great John 24 McCain, who you have disparaged as being -- you 25 don't like him, you said at the time, because he</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 83</p>	<p>1 bring to this is that access to health care 2 should be a right and not just a privilege of 3 those who can afford it. And the plan has to be 4 to strengthen the Affordable Care Act, not get 5 rid of it -- 6 LINSEY DAVIS: Thank you -- 7 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: -- the 8 past is prologue in terms of where Donald Trump 9 stands on that. 10 LINSEY DAVIS: I want to move to an 11 issue that's important -- 12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: She made a 13 mistake. Number one, John McCain fought 14 Obamacare for ten years. But it wasn't only him. 15 It was, all of the Democrats that kept it going. 16 And you know what? We could do much better than 17 Obamacare. Much less money. But she won't 18 improve private insurance for people. Private, 19 medical insurance. That's another thing she 20 doesn't want to get -- 21 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump -- 22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- people are 23 paying privately for insurance that have worked 24 hard and made money, and they want to have 25 private. She wants everybody to be on government</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 85</p>

<p>1 insurance where you wait six months for an 2 operation that you need immediately.</p> <p>3 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump, thank 4 you. We have another issue that we'd like to get 5 to that's important for a number of Americans, in 6 particular younger voters, and that's climate 7 change. President Trump, with regard to the 8 environment, you say that we have to have clean 9 air and clean water. Vice President Harris, you 10 call climate change an existential threat. The 11 question to you both tonight is what would you do 12 to fight climate change? And Vice President 13 Harris, we'll start with you. One minute for you 14 each.</p> <p>15 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: Well, 16 the former President had said that climate change 17 is a hoax. And what we know is that it is very 18 real. You ask anyone who lives in a state who 19 has experienced these extreme weather 20 occurrences, who now is either being denied home 21 insurance or is being jacked up. You ask anybody 22 who has been um, the victim of what that means in 23 terms of losing their home, having nowhere to go. 24 We know that we can actually deal with this 25 issue. The young people of America care deeply</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 86</p>	<p>1 many cases owned by China. They're building 2 these massive plants, and they think they're 3 going to sell their cars into the United States 4 because of these people. What they have given to 5 China is unbelievable. But we're not going to 6 let that. We'll put tariffs on those cars so 7 they can't come into our country. Because they 8 will kill the United Auto Workers and any auto 9 worker, whether it's in Detroit or South Carolina 10 or any other place. What they've done to 11 business and manufacturing in this country is 12 horrible. We have nothing because they, they 13 refuse -- you know, Biden doesn't go after people 14 because supposedly China paid him millions of 15 dollars. He's afraid to do it. Between him and 16 his son. They get all this money from Ukraine. 17 They get all this money from all of these 18 different countries. And then you wonder why is 19 he so loyal to this one, that one Ukraine, China? 20 Why is he? Why did he get 3 1/2 million dollars 21 from the mayor of Moscow's wife? Why did he get 22 -- why did she pay him 3 1/2 million dollars? 23 This is a crooked administration, and they're 24 selling our country down the tubes.</p> <p>25 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump, thank</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 88</p>
<p>1 about this issue. And I am proud that as Vice 2 President over the last four years we have 3 invested a trillion dollars in a clean energy 4 economy while we have also increased domestic gas 5 production to historic levels. We have created 6 over 800,000 new manufacturing jobs while I have 7 been Vice President. We have invested in clean 8 energy to the point that we are opening up 9 factories around the world. Donald Trump said he 10 was going to create manufacturing jobs. He lost 11 manufacturing jobs. And I'm also proud to have 12 the endorsement of the United Auto Workers and 13 Shawn Fain, who also know that part of building a 14 clean energy economy includes investing in 15 American-made products, American automobiles. It 16 includes growing what we can do around American 17 manufacturing and opening up auto plants, not 18 closing them like happened under Donald Trump.</p> <p>19 LINSEY DAVIS: Vice President Harris, 20 thank you.</p> <p>21 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: That didn't 22 happen under Donald Trump. Let me just tell you, 23 they lost 10,000 manufacturing jobs this last 24 month. It's going -- they're all leaving. 25 They're building big auto plants in Mexico. In</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 87</p>	<p>1 you.</p> <p>2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Thank you.</p> <p>3 DAVID MUIR: We'll be right back with 4 closing statements from both of our candidates. 5 An historic night, this ABC News Presidential 6 Debate from Philadelphia. Back in a moment.</p> <p>7 The time has come for closing 8 statements. And Vice President Harris, we begin 9 with you.</p> <p>10 VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS: So, I 11 think you've heard tonight two very different 12 visions for our country. One that is focused on 13 the future and the other that is focused on the 14 past. And an attempt to take us backward. But 15 we're not going back. And I do believe that the 16 American people know we all have so much more in 17 common than what separates us, and we can chart a 18 new way forward. And a vision of that includes 19 having a plan, understanding the aspirations, the 20 dreams, the hopes, the ambition of the American 21 people, which is why I intend to create an 22 opportunity economy, investing in small 23 businesses, in new families, in what we can do 24 around protecting seniors, what we can do that is 25 about giving hard-working folks a break in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 89</p>

<p>1 bringing down the cost of living. I believe in 2 what we can do together that is about sustaining 3 America's standing in the world and ensuring we 4 have the respect that we so rightly deserve 5 including respecting our military and ensuring we 6 have the most lethal fighting force in the world. 7 I will be a President that will protect our 8 fundamental rights and freedoms including the 9 right of a woman to make decisions about her own 10 body and not have her government tell her what to 11 do. I'll tell you; I started my career as a 12 prosecutor. I was a D.A. I was an attorney 13 general. A United States Senator. And now Vice 14 President. I've only had one client. The 15 people. And I'll tell you, as a prosecutor I 16 never asked a victim, or a witness are you a 17 Republican or a Democrat. The only thing I ever 18 asked them, are you okay? And that's the kind of 19 president we need right now. Someone who cares 20 about you and is not putting themselves first. I 21 intend to be a president for all Americans and 22 focus on what we can do over the next 10 and 20 23 years to build back up our country by investing 24 right now in you the American people. 25 LINSEY DAVIS: Vice President Harris,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 90</p>	<p>1 decline. We're being laughed at all over the 2 world. All over the world, they laugh, I know 3 the leaders very well. They're coming to see me. 4 They call me. We're laughed at all over the 5 world. They don't understand what happened to us 6 as a nation. We're not a leader. We don't have 7 any idea what's going on. We have wars going on 8 in the Middle East. We have wars going on with 9 Russia and Ukraine. We're going to end up in a 10 third World War. And it will be a war like no 11 other because of nuclear weapons, the power of 12 weaponry. I rebuilt our entire military. She 13 gave a lot of it away to the Taliban. She gave 14 it to Afghanistan. What these people have done 15 to our country, and maybe toughest of all, is 16 allowing millions of people to come into our 17 country, many of them are criminals, and they're 18 destroying our country. The worst President, the 19 worst Vice President in the history of our 20 country. 21 LINSEY DAVIS: President Trump thank 22 you. And that is our ABC News presidential 23 debate from here in Philadelphia at the National 24 Constitution Center. I'm Linsey Davis. 25 DAVID MUIR: And I'm David Muir. Thank</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 92</p>
<p>1 thank you. President Trump? 2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: So, she just 3 started by saying she's going to do this, 4 she's going to do that, she's going to do 5 all these wonderful things. Why hasn't she done 6 it? She's been there for 3 1/2 years. They've 7 had 3 1/2 years to fix the border. They've had 3 8 1/2 years to create jobs and all the things we 9 talked about. Why hasn't she done it? She 10 should leave right now, go down to that beautiful 11 White House, go to the Capitol, get everyone 12 together and do the things you want to do. But 13 you haven't done it. And you won't do it. 14 Because you believe in things that the American 15 people don't believe in. You believe in things 16 like, we're not going to frack. We're not going 17 to take fossil fuel. We're not going to do -- 18 things that are going to make this country 19 strong, whether you like it or not. Germany 20 tried that and within one year they were back to 21 building normal energy plants. We're not ready 22 for it. We can't sacrifice our country for the 23 sake of bad vision. But I just ask one simple 24 question. Why didn't she do it? We're a failing 25 nation. We're a nation that's in serious</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 91</p>	<p>1 you for watching here in the U.S. And all over 2 the world. And from all of us here at ABC News, 3 good night. 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 93</p>

<div><p>1 CERTIFICATION</p><p>2 I, Sonya Ledanski Hyde, certify that the</p><p>3 foregoing transcript is a true and accurate</p><p>4 record of the proceedings.</p><p>5</p><p>6 <u>Sonya M. Ledanski Hyde</u></p><p>7</p><p>8</p><p>9</p><p>10</p><p>11</p><p>12 Veritext Legal Solutions</p><p>13 330 Old Country Road</p><p>14 Suite 300</p><p>15 Mineola, NY 11501</p><p>16</p><p>17 Date: February 17, 2025</p><p>18</p><p>19</p><p>20</p><p>21</p><p>22</p><p>23</p><p>24</p><p>25</p><p>Page 94</p></div>	

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October 11, 2024 Campaign Speech by
President Donald Trump in Aurora, Colorado

<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Thank you very 2 much, everybody. Thank you very much. And it's 3 great to be back in this beautiful state with 4 thousands of proud, hardworking, American 5 patriots. That's what you are. And before going 6 further, I want to let everyone who is still 7 recovering from the hurricanes that hit Florida, 8 Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, 9 Tennessee, and Virginia to know that we are 10 thinking of them and we are praying for them. 11 God bless them. God bless them. We 12 have a lot of great people today, and I'll do it 13 at the beginning because we have a lot to talk 14 about. What the hell is happening with our 15 country? What are they doing? What are they 16 doing to Colorado? They're ruining your state. 17 They're ruining your state. So, let's do this. 18 Let's just very quickly mention some of 19 the really great people and great patriots, and 20 then we're going to get back into the business of 21 discussing what we're going to do. You know what 22 you're going to do? You're going to vote for 23 Trump, and we'll solve your problem in about 15 24 minutes. We're pleased to be joined this 25 afternoon by Congresswoman Lauren Boebert.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 tough as hell. 2 We want him in a very high capacity, 3 Mike Davis. Mike. Thank you, Mike. Where's 4 Mike? Mike is great. Here's a man -- I met him 5 backstage, and I realized I'd never be a big 6 football player. Denver Bronco Derek Wolfe. 7 Where is he? Where is he? Where is he? Man, is 8 he -- where is he? Oh, there he -- he's a little 9 hard. 10 You are one big guy. You know, you are 11 one hell of a guy, but you had a great career. 12 Congratulations. Ten years in the NFL, all with 13 your team, and he was a winner. He was a winner. 14 And you are a winner. Thank you very much for 15 being here, Derek. Appreciate it. We have a 16 very popular man, a very popular political 17 person, and a great congressman from Texas, 18 Wesley Hunt. 19 Wesley. Wesley's fantastic. Thank 20 you. Wesley came in with me. And a woman who's, 21 unbelievable, actually. I've gotten to know her. 22 She endorsed me in 2016. I said, "You got to be 23 kidding." It was a surprise endorsement. And 24 she believed in the message and what we were 25 saying. We were right about what we were saying.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p>
<p>1 Lauren, good job today. Thank you. 2 Also, Greg Lopez. Thank you, Greg. And a woman 3 who beat Liz Cheney by the largest margin in the 4 history of Congress. She got out of that whack 5 job. Harriet Hagerman. Harriet, thank you. 6 Where's Harriet? What a job. She beat herself 7 badly. The single biggest victory in the 8 history, defeating a person sitting in Congress, 9 and she deserved it. 10 She is bad news. Thank you, Harriet, 11 very much. You're really fantastic. Thank you, 12 darling. Also, we have congressional candidates 13 who are really terrific people. They have my 14 endorsement. Gabe Evans and Jeff Crank. A 15 candidate for Congress and former ICE field 16 office director who did a really good job for me, 17 John Fabbriatore. 18 John Fabbriatore. That's a hell of a 19 name, but it worked. It worked because he did a 20 great job. Wyoming secretary of state, Chuck 21 Gray. Chuck, thank you very much. Great job, 22 Chuck. The sheriff of Douglas County, Darren 23 Weekly. Aurora City councilwoman, Danielle 24 Jurinsky. And Stephanie Hancock. The founder or 25 president of the Article III Project, this guy is</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p>	<p>1 You know, when we came down that 2 escalator and I made those statements, everyone 3 said, "How terrible are those statements?" Turned 4 out that they were minor compared to -- they 5 were, like, little minor statements by 6 comparison. But she got it better than anybody 7 and she endorsed us very early when it wasn't the 8 thing to do. 9 From Alaska, the great Sarah Palin. 10 Where is she? Thank you, Sarah. With the help 11 of everyone here today, 25 days from now, think 12 of it, 25 days, we are going to defeat Kamala 13 Harris, who has no clue what the hell is going 14 on. I have to tell you. Did you see where she 15 did a town hall yesterday and she used a 16 teleprompter? I never saw a town -- you don't 17 use teleprompters. 18 We don't use teleprompters period, 19 pretty much. You don't use them for town halls. 20 No. She's not the right person for -- not for 21 this country, not for any country. But very 22 simply, we're going to make America great again. 23 So, I've been waiting for this. I've been 24 waiting for this day because I've been reading 25 about it like so many people all around the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p>

<p>1 world, and I want to get here as soon as I could.</p> <p>2 And I took a good time and a good day</p> <p>3 and, you know, the crowd, we could sell this</p> <p>4 place out four times. You see what's outside.</p> <p>5 NBC, of all networks, said a little while ago,</p> <p>6 they announced, it's the single longest line for</p> <p>7 anything that they've ever seen. That's pretty</p> <p>8 good. But I've been waiting for this day, and</p> <p>9 we're here finally in Aurora, Colorado to call</p> <p>10 the attention of the world, and, unfortunately,</p> <p>11 the world's already got its attention, to one of</p> <p>12 the most egregious betrayals that any leader in</p> <p>13 any nation has ever inflicted on its own people,</p> <p>14 what they've done to our country, what they're</p> <p>15 doing to our country.</p> <p>16 They're destroying -- they are ruining</p> <p>17 our country. We are being led by stupid people.</p> <p>18 We cannot take it anymore. For the past four</p> <p>19 years, as the so-called border czar, the person</p> <p>20 in charge of our border, Kamala Harris -- and you</p> <p>21 can't use the name Harris. You know, if you say</p> <p>22 Harris, nobody knows who the hell you're talking</p> <p>23 about.</p> <p>24 Think of it. Harris. Nice name. It's</p> <p>25 like -- so we use the name, Kamala. She was</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 enforcement all over the world -- they know them</p> <p>2 all over the world. They're a savage gang, one</p> <p>3 of the worst in the world, and they're getting</p> <p>4 bigger all the time because of our stupidity.</p> <p>5 They're known as TDA. TDA. TDA has killed seven</p> <p>6 people today, sir. Last month, six men with</p> <p>7 armed rifles and many other men standing right</p> <p>8 outside waiting for them, and handguns were</p> <p>9 caught on camera as they were forced into a</p> <p>10 situation, and they said they were forced.</p> <p>11 They weren't forced. They got their</p> <p>12 way into an apartment building. They threatened</p> <p>13 the tenants at gunpoint. These are people that</p> <p>14 never saw anything like this. These are people</p> <p>15 that never experienced criminals and crime. They</p> <p>16 burst into the building and they held tenants at</p> <p>17 gunpoint and at knifepoint.</p> <p>18 Ten minutes later, they opened fire on</p> <p>19 a 25-year-old man outside the building, fatally</p> <p>20 shooting him. Of the barbaric thugs who have</p> <p>21 been identified, at least three are illegal</p> <p>22 aliens who were in border patrol custody. They</p> <p>23 were in custody. By the way, four years ago, we</p> <p>24 had the safest border in the history of our</p> <p>25 country.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p>
<p>1 last, right? She came in last, and now she's</p> <p>2 running. How about that? In all fairness, I'm</p> <p>3 not a fan of Sleepy Joe, but Sleepy Joe got 14</p> <p>4 million votes. She got none. She never made it</p> <p>5 to the great state of Iowa. She quit.</p> <p>6 Out of 22 people, she quit. She had</p> <p>7 nothing going. And interestingly, when she came</p> <p>8 in, she was okay. Pretty good. But then they</p> <p>9 heard her talking. They watched her brain in</p> <p>10 action. And when they saw the brain in action,</p> <p>11 they said that's a -- and here she is again. But</p> <p>12 Kamala has imported an army of illegal alien gang</p> <p>13 members and migrant criminals from the dungeons</p> <p>14 of the third world.</p> <p>15 They come from the dungeons, think of</p> <p>16 that, the dungeons of the third world, from</p> <p>17 prisons and jails, insane asylums, and mental</p> <p>18 institutions. And she has had them resettled</p> <p>19 beautifully into your community to prey upon</p> <p>20 innocent, American citizens. That's what they're</p> <p>21 doing. And no place is it more evident than</p> <p>22 right here because in Aurora, multiple apartment</p> <p>23 complexes have been taken over by the savage</p> <p>24 Venezuela prison gang known as Tren de Aragua.</p> <p>25 Or is your law enforcement and law</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 Put up that sign, please. Put up my</p> <p>2 all-time favorite graph. Put up my all-time --</p> <p>3 get that put up. That is the most beautiful</p> <p>4 graph I've ever seen. It's the most beautiful</p> <p>5 piece of paper I've ever seen. I take it home</p> <p>6 every night, and I sleep with it and I kiss it.</p> <p>7 Oh, I kiss it. Because without that sucker, I</p> <p>8 wouldn't be here right now.</p> <p>9 So, if you think about it, Mr. Pastor,</p> <p>10 great job you did, Pastor. If you think about</p> <p>11 it, illegal immigration saved my life. I'm the</p> <p>12 only one. Usually, it's the opposite. It's</p> <p>13 usually the opposite. Thank you very much. But</p> <p>14 you see that arrow on the bottom? That's when I</p> <p>15 left -- that's the day I left office.</p> <p>16 You had the lowest number of people</p> <p>17 coming into our country in the history --</p> <p>18 recorded history of our country. And then look</p> <p>19 what happened. Like a rocket ship. And they</p> <p>20 were rough, the ones that came in. We were very,</p> <p>21 very careful. We were Remain in Mexico. We</p> <p>22 checked everybody out. People came in, but then</p> <p>23 they got rough because then they said, "Let's do</p> <p>24 open borders. Let's set the whole world."</p> <p>25 And as soon as they did that, jails</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p>

<p>1 were emptied, mental institutions were emptied. 2 And I would have done the same thing if I were in 3 charge of any of the many countries we're talking 4 about. Three of these thugs were in Border 5 Patrol custody but were released into the United 6 States by Kamala. And my message -- they were 7 released, and they killed people, a lot of 8 people. 9 They were released. But my message 10 today is very simple. No person who has 11 inflicted the violence and terror that Kamala 12 Harris has inflicted on this community can ever 13 be allowed to become the president of the United 14 States. We're not going to let it happen. And 15 your weak and ineffective governor -- he's a 16 totally ineffective guy, by the way. 17 I hope you know that. His name is 18 Jared Polis. I got to know him. I got to know 19 him in the White House. He come in with other 20 governors, some Democrat. I see them all. I 21 worked with all of them. I know the good ones 22 and the bad ones. He's not a good one, this one. 23 But he come in, "Sir, it's so nice to meet you, 24 sir. Oh, it's such an honor to be -- oh, this is 25 the Oval Office. Oh, sir. Thank you, sir.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 take care of it. 2 But Paul is -- he's a coward. He's a 3 fraud. He's pathetically trying to deny -- he's 4 pathetic. He doesn't see. You know, they don't 5 want to see. You know what? They don't want to 6 -- they want to stay with Washington because, 7 otherwise, they'll get indicted. They'll find 8 they did something wrong. They'll get indicted 9 if they don't. 10 So, he's afraid. They're all afraid. 11 They're all cowards. So, this guy doesn't see 12 what you see. He doesn't see people bursting 13 into buildings with AK-47s, military-style 14 weapons, sometimes better than our own military. 15 You have to ask, they're illegal migrants. They 16 come from poor areas. Where the hell do they get 17 these guns, the best guns? Where do they got 18 them? Where do they got them? Who gives them 19 better guns than our military has? Who is giving 20 them the guns? But she's committed crimes 21 against your state. 22 She has committed crimes by allowing 23 these criminals in, and many of these people are 24 murderers. Let's take a look at a couple of 25 little, quick notes that I put up. You know,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p>
<p>1 Thank you, sir." 2 Then he comes back here and he says, "I 3 didn't like the guy." Can you believe it? And I 4 gave you -- not him, I didn't give anything. I 5 gave you everything that they wanted. I gave you 6 because I love this state. This state has to 7 flip, Republican. It has to. It has to. Let's 8 do it. That's why I'm here. 9 Let's do it. I'm not here for my 10 health. That's why I'm here. Think of where I 11 could be though. I could take our beautiful 12 First Lady. I could be on the beautiful beaches 13 all over the world. I could be in Monte Carlo. 14 I could be all over the world, the best 15 properties in the world. I have the best 16 properties. 17 And where am I? I'm right now in 18 Aurora, and that's where I want to be because 19 we're going to solve this problem. We're going 20 to solve this problem, right? If you said, where 21 would you rather be, in the most beautiful 22 beaches in the world or with you? Trying to 23 figure out what the hell happened to Aurora 24 because you have a very different place than you 25 had just a few months ago, right? We're going to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p>	<p>1 we're giving you the expensive treatment because 2 of the fact we want to win the state so badly. 3 So, we gave you a couple of videos today. Play 4 them, please. 5 [BEGIN VIDEO] 6 REPORTER: Was it a mistake to loosen 7 the immigration policies? 8 REPORTER: Do you regret terminating it 9 given that migration has increased in the wake of 10 that? 11 REPORTER: The entire world is showing 12 up here at our doorstep. They're crossing 13 illegally, and they are expecting to get released 14 here into the United States. 15 REPORTER: A group of men walking up a 16 stairwell at the Edge at Lowry apartment complex 17 in Aurora. All of them appear to be carrying 18 rifles and handguns, and the video shot earlier 19 this month, one of the men can be seen talking on 20 a cell phone. They all then gather around a door 21 and go in. Another video clip shows men forcing 22 a door open. This is a picture of gang members 23 breaking into a vacant apartment so they could 24 move a Venezuelan family in and then collect 25 rent.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p>

<p>1 "This is our business plan," one gang 2 member told the housekeeper. "If he," the 3 property manager, "doesn't like it, we'll fill 4 him with bullets." 5 REPORTER: Police in the region say a 6 Venezuelan gang known as Tren de Aragua has 7 victimized thousands through extortion, drug, and 8 human trafficking, kidnapping, and murder. 9 Alvaro Boza, a former Venezuelan police 10 officer, now living in Florida, says he fled his 11 country in large part because the gang had become 12 so powerful they could kill law enforcement like 13 him with impunity. Boza says a fellow police 14 officer who refused to cooperate with the gang 15 was shot 50 times. Now U.S. law enforcement, 16 including Customs and Border Protection and the 17 FBI, say the gang has made their way into the 18 country. 19 REPORTER: Members have been tied to 20 hundreds of crimes from assaulting NYPD officers 21 and a murder in Miami to shooting two different 22 NYPD cops who were trying to arrest one of its 23 members in June. 24 REPORTER: We hear from the mother of 25 Jocelyn Nungaray, the 12-year-old, allegedly</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 crossings are putting a strain on cities across 2 America. 3 REPORTER: It is a full-blown invasion. 4 REPORTER: Armed Venezuelan gang 5 members storming an apartment complex in Aurora, 6 Colorado. 7 REPORTER: When people talk about 8 migrant crime, this is what they're talking 9 about. Biden and Harris had created a program to 10 bring them in under humanitarian parole. 11 KAMALA HARRIS: I am in favor of saying 12 that we're not going to treat people who are 13 undocumented across the border as criminals. 14 REPORTER: More than 13,000 illegal 15 immigrants convicted of murder have been released 16 into the United States. 17 WOMAN 2: My 20-year-old daughter, 18 Kayla Hamilton, was murdered in her own room. 19 Kayla's murderer was apprehended by Border 20 Patrol, crossing illegally into the U.S. 21 REPORTER: Kayla's murderer had been 22 improperly released into the United States. 23 KAMALA HARRIS: Abolish ICE, yeah. We 24 need to probably think about starting from 25 scratch.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p>
<p>1 assaulted and killed in June by two illegal 2 migrants. New court documents revealed they were 3 part of a Venezuelan gang. 4 REPORTER: Trend de Aragua has given 5 their members the green light to attack and kill 6 police officers in Denver. 7 REPORTER: We went out to some of 8 Chicago's most violent neighborhoods to meet with 9 current and former gang members who tell us that 10 TDA first showed up when the city opened up 11 migrant shelters in these areas, and that now the 12 Venezuelans are trying to move in. 13 REPORTER: The city nonprofits have 14 lined up to help the migrants that have come 15 here, but nobody is helping the American 16 citizens, the residents that are trapped. 17 WOMAN 1: They told us that they really 18 couldn't do anything unless something happened. 19 It is not, by any means, an isolated occurrence, 20 unfortunately. I call 911. No help comes for 21 me. No help. We were on our own, and we were 22 left to die. 23 REPORTER: Open borders, deadly 24 consequences. 25 REPORTER: Border crisis. Record-high</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p>	<p>1 REPORTER: An Afghan national is in 2 custody the day after being accused of plotting 3 an Election Day terrorist attack. The suspect 4 entered the U.S. on a special immigrant visa. 5 REPORTER: More than a dozen people 6 suspected of being Tren de Aragua gang members 7 right here in San Antonio. 8 REPORTER: The gang members had been 9 terrorizing the apartment complex. 10 REPORTER: New details in the murder of 11 Laken Riley. The illegal immigrant suspect who 12 cops say committed the heinous murder is a 13 Venezuelan national. 14 REPORTER: And was paroled and released 15 into the country by the Biden administration. 16 REPORTER: Two men, investigators say, 17 are in the country illegally from Venezuela are 18 charged with capital murder in the death of 19 Jocelyn Nungaray. 20 REPORTER: Court documents suggest a 21 group of men arrested for beating and robbing a 22 Dallas woman last month are members of a 23 Venezuelan street gang. 24 REPORTER: Emmanuel Hernandez-Hernandez 25 was booked by Colleyville police just two days</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p>

<p>1 earlier and released the day before the robbery. 2 [END VIDEO] 3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Four years 4 ago, it would be unthinkable that you'd be 5 watching something like that. Again, we had, 6 think of it, the safest border in the history of 7 our country. We never had a border so safe. All 8 they had to do is leave it. Joe could have gone 9 to the beach. He thinks he looks good in a 10 bathing suit. And all he had to do is leave the 11 guys that we had. They were great, great people, 12 and we ran it tough. 13 Remain in Mexico. Little things like 14 Remain in Mexico. I want to say we want to have 15 people come into our country but they have to 16 come in legally. We don't want them. And now, 17 America is known all throughout the world as 18 occupied America. They call it occupied. We're 19 being occupied by a criminal force. 20 And we're an occupied state that 21 refuses to let our great law enforcement 22 professionals do the job that they so dearly want 23 to do. You know they want to do the job so 24 badly, but they are threatened constantly. 25 You're going to lose your pension.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 sir. It's such an honor." And yet it was Polis 2 who led the move to take me off the ballot 3 because I was leading in the polls against all of 4 the Democrats. And then the Supreme Court, very 5 brave and very brilliant, actually, voted nine to 6 nothing that I should be on the ballot. 7 Nine to nothing. Everybody was 8 unanimous that I should be -- I was leading 9 everybody in the ballot. Every Democrat, I was 10 leading everybody. He said, "We have to get them 11 off the ballot because that was part of their 12 scheme." You know, not only the weaponization, 13 but this was actually part of the weaponization. 14 Their first move was to try and get me 15 off the bat. They didn't want to run against me. 16 They liked other people much better. Much 17 better. You know, we ran and won in 2016. We 18 did much better by millions of votes in 2020, but 19 we won't discuss that. And I will tell you, you 20 see it by the crowd. You see it outside. 21 Let's take a look outside. We are 22 today -- there's more enthusiasm for this 23 movement, MAGA, the greatest movement. It's 24 called Make America Great Again. There's more 25 enthusiasm today than ever before. But there was</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p>
<p>1 They don't want to do it. What is this ideology? 2 It's so sick. But to everyone here in Colorado 3 and all across our nation, I make this pledge and 4 vow to you, November 5th, 2024 will be liberation 5 day in America. It will be Liberation Day. 6 Thank you. 7 [AUDIENCE CHANTS "USA"] 8 Thank you. I will rescue Aurora and 9 every town that has been invaded and conquered. 10 These towns have been conquered. Explain that to 11 your governor. He doesn't have a clue. They've 12 been conquered. And we will put these vicious 13 and bloodthirsty criminals in jail or kick them 14 out of our country, and we will be very, very 15 effective in doing it. It's going to happen 16 very, very fast. 17 Going to get them the hell out of our 18 country. And if your weak and ineffective 19 governor, Jared Polis, was doing his job, he 20 would be leading the fight to get these gangs and 21 thugs the hell out of Colorado now. And 22 remember, it was Polis. "So, nice to be in the 23 White House, sir. Yes, sir." He called me sir. 24 Called me sir. I would have done 25 whatever the hell I wanted. "Yes, sir. Always,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p>	<p>1 great indignation in Colorado by what this 2 ineffective person did. They really were angry 3 at him and they were angry. 4 And especially, you know who was the 5 most indignant? The Democrats, believe it or 6 not. They thought it was a terrible thing to do 7 because that is really a threat to democracy, not 8 the fake threat that they use all the time. So, 9 I hope that Colorado -- I love this place. I'm 10 here a lot. As you know, I have a lot of friends 11 -- I have a lot of friends here, and they tell me 12 the whole thing is turning, but you can't live 13 like this. 14 You can't live with these people. 15 These are stone-cold killers. You could be 16 walking down the street with your husband. 17 You'll both be dead. They won't even remember 18 they did it the following morning. You can't 19 live like this. So, I hope that Colorado will 20 show a tremendous protest vote for what they did 21 to try and keep you off the ballot and more 22 importantly, for what they have done to the 23 fabric of your culture. 24 And remember, I really believe Colorado 25 is -- you know, we're very close. We're very</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p>

<p>1 close. In fact, in one poll, we're leading by a 2 little bit. Think of it, though. Just think of 3 it. The Democrats are good people. The 4 Democrats were angrier than anybody. They 5 thought it was terrible, the concept of it. 6 And even when you get the three very 7 liberal votes in the Supreme Court voting and 8 when they vote for Trump, you know, it's got to 9 be pretty off the wall, right? 10 But they did. I respect them for doing 11 it. But Colorado is going to vote for me because 12 I am going to make Colorado safe again. We're 13 going to make you safe. We're going to do it 14 fast. In three local apartment complexes that 15 Kamala has infested with the TDA. That's the 16 gang that we talked about, the prison gang, they 17 come out of prisons, 80 percent of the residents 18 are now living with their relatives in different 19 states and other places. 20 They've been forced out of their 21 building. Twenty percent of the residents 22 stayed, and they're fearing for their lives. 23 They had no choice but to stay. They're being 24 threatened every single day. They're going to be 25 out soon. They're going to be out. They don't</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 Aurora. 2 And remember that chart, my all-time 3 favorite chart, remember that chart. Look what 4 happened, that arrow, all-time low in history. 5 And then look to the right. Look what happened. 6 Literally, the day they took over, it became a 7 scene that nobody thought was possible. Not in 8 this state. I know this state very well. 9 I've been here so much. And not in 10 this state. Nobody thought this was possible. 11 They would even be up here talking about this. 12 Did anybody think five years ago, six years, 13 anybody would be up here talking about that a 14 Venezuelan gang with the most sophisticated 15 rifles, weapons, and guns that anybody has ever 16 seen would be taking over your state? 17 And they're not stopping. They're not 18 stopping. This guy gets in, and you got to get a 19 new governor, by the way. But if he gets in 20 again -- runs next year. But, actually, more 21 importantly, I can't believe she gets it. I 22 can't believe it. By the way, did you see "60 23 Minutes"? Her answer was so incompetent that CBS 24 and "60 Minutes," a prestigious show, but I knew 25 they were crooked as hell for years.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p>
<p>1 have to be out. I would say if they can hold 2 out. 3 you know, in January 20th -- it's too 4 long. You better get out of this, too, I'd say. 5 But January 20th, those guys are going to be out 6 on their asses, and they're going to be out of 7 this country. They're going to be out of their 8 country. Members of the gang now beat down doors 9 with hammers and engage in open gun battles with 10 rival groups in this once peaceful, beautiful, 11 pretty crime-free community. 12 The illegal alien gang member who was 13 the alleged leader behind the invasion of Aurora 14 was recently charged for beating a man beyond 15 recognition. Beat him beyond recognition, 16 breaking his nose, breaking his jaw, and 17 inflicting traumatic brain injury on this victim. 18 He will never be the same, as you know. 19 The thug was later arrested for 20 shooting two men in the same apartment building 21 and breaking another man's ankle, which he did 22 just for fun. Once again, this animal had 23 arrived at our border and was released into the 24 United States by Kamala Harris, the worst border 25 czar in the history of our country here in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p>	<p>1 They used to do the opposite to me. 2 You know, to me, they used to cut my statement. 3 To her, they added the statement on. This is a 4 big difference. You want the guy that gets cut. 5 They cut it because I made such great statements. 6 I said, "Why did you cut that statement?" "Well, 7 we just felt we had to do it for time." They cut 8 the heart out of the statements. 9 But for me, they cut the statements. 10 For them, they added it on. So, they took her 11 entire statement out, and they took some just 12 words. It's just words. She doesn't know what 13 the hell she's talking about. I'm telling you, 14 there's something wrong with her. They took 15 these words. So, think of this. And, you know, 16 they got caught. 17 I think it's the greatest scandal in 18 broadcast history, actually. They took it out 19 and they added something else in. You think 20 they'd do that for Trump? Her statement was so 21 bad that rather than airing it, they cut it out. 22 They took out the whole thing and they added a 23 much shorter statement that she made 10 minutes 24 later, having nothing to do with the question. 25 I don't think anything like that's ever</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>

<p>1 happened. And now we're finding out that it 2 happened throughout. It wasn't the only 3 instance. And now we're thinking that it 4 probably happened with Biden a couple of times 5 because he was interviewed by "60 Minutes" and 6 some strange things happened. So, they're asking 7 -- but think of this.</p> <p>8 So, CBS gets a license, and the license 9 is based on honesty. I think they have to take 10 their license away. I do. Here in Aurora, a 35- 11 year-old mother of three had to leave her 12 apartment out of fear for her children's lives. 13 She said, quote, "It's not safe there, especially 14 if you have kids. If you have kids, it's 15 horrible.</p> <p>16 My kids used to walk to school. They 17 were so happy. We were so safe, but they don't 18 feel safe anymore. And I would never let them 19 walk to school. Sometimes I keep my kids home. 20 I don't even let them go to school." When I 21 announced my presidency in 2015, you all remember 22 that time, and they said, "Oh, he's just doing it 23 for fun." You think this has been fun?</p> <p>24 I've been investigated more than Al 25 Capone. This is not -- Al Capone, Scarface, he's</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 many times have you heard that?</p> <p>2 You know, when Trump ran, he made those 3 statements. Those statements are peanuts 4 compared to what's happening to our country. 5 These are the worst criminals in the world. 6 Kamala used to say -- she can't say it anymore, 7 "No, the people we're bringing in are very nice 8 people. They don't commit crime," remember? 9 Our criminals are worse. Our criminals 10 are like babies compared to these people. These 11 people are the most violent people on earth. And 12 remember, they don't come just from South 13 America. They come from the Congo and Africa. 14 They come from all over the world. They come 15 from the Middle East. They come from Asia. 16 They come from prisons and jails. They 17 come from all over the world. And she was 18 saying, these are very nice people. Either she's 19 really dumb or she's very naive. Something's 20 wrong up there. The only good thing about it -- 21 I'll tell you, there's a couple of good things. 22 There are only one good thing, but maybe two. 23 One of the good things about it is that 24 they make our criminals look like nice people. 25 Okay? So, our criminals are now -- we see these</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p>
<p>1 the most probably -- I always try and think of 2 very evil people. Give me the most, and I'll 3 tell you I was investigated more. But think of 4 it. Here goes Hillary Clinton. How about 5 Hunter, right? Now I think of Al Capone because 6 there's a toughness, a meanness, Scarface, all -- 7 he had the whole deal.</p> <p>8 And I've been investigated more than 9 Alphonse Capone. That's an amazing phenomena. 10 But when I announced my presidency in 2015, I 11 said they're not sending their best, and I took 12 such heat. "How dare he say that? This is 13 America." Well, it turned out that what I said 14 was like peanuts compared to the fact.</p> <p>15 I said they're sending people that have 16 lots of problems, which they definitely do. 17 They're sending people and bringing those 18 problems with them, and they're bringing drugs, 19 and they're bringing crime, and they're rapists. 20 Okay. So, I made that statement, and I 21 got the hell knocked out of me by the fake news. 22 Look how many you have back there. Oh, I got the 23 hell. But I took a lot of heat for saying it, 24 but I was right. And now everybody is admitting 25 that I was right. You know that Trump -- was how</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p>	<p>1 really horrible, horrendous criminals, and we 2 say, they're not so bad. The other thing is 3 they're really great if you happen to be running 4 against the politician that allowed this to 5 happen because I don't know how it's possible for 6 anybody to lose -- because we have to clean out 7 our country and we have to make America great 8 again, and we're going to do it. So, you know 9 the story here.</p> <p>10 We're joined today by another Aurora 11 resident who you know, Cindy Romero, and she's 12 going to come up and say just a few words. She 13 bravely published her camera footage of what she 14 witnessed, and it is gone all over the world. 15 Cindy was forced to flee her home after a car was 16 hit with gunfire, another day in Aurora.</p> <p>17 Can you imagine this happening? A lot 18 of these people live in Aurora. They live in 19 Colorado. Most of you live in Colorado. And can 20 you imagine that you have somebody standing up 21 here talking about this stuff? It's hard to 22 believe. She said life in her community had 23 become, quote, "a total nightmare." And every 24 time she went to take out the trash or went to 25 bed at night, she had to lock her door with four</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 29</p>

<p>1 separate locks. 2 She has locks all over her door, and 3 then put braces on her door, and she was 4 preventing people that were knocking on her door. 5 They were wanting to do a lot of bad things. So, 6 I'd like to ask Cindy. She's been very brave, 7 actually, and she was able to release footage 8 that was so violent and vicious. 9 And Cindy, I wouldn't have done it 10 personally, but that's Okay. You're probably 11 braver than I am. Cindy, come up for a minute, 12 please. Come on up. Cindy Romero 13 Thank you. Thank you. This isn't just 14 affecting me. This is affecting all of you as 15 well. We've got to get Trump back in office. 16 We've got to get it done. With Trump's help, we 17 can take the state back over. We can make a 18 difference. Thank you, guys, so much for all of 19 your support, for believing me. Thank you. 20 Thank you. Thank you. She's very 21 brave. Getting all of the evidence and all of 22 that footage, you -- I just said you're very 23 brave, Cindy. Thank you very much. Really a big 24 help. And because of Cindy and others like 25 Cindy, the radical left can't say it never</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 well. I knocked out ISIS, as you know. 2 They've been playing with ISIS for 20 3 years. I did it in one month. We have the 4 greatest military in the world, but you have to 5 know how to use them. You have to know how to 6 use them. But I protect you against outside 7 enemies. But, you know, I always say we have the 8 outside enemy, so you can say China, you can say 9 Russia, you can say Kim Jong Un, you can say -- 10 but that's not -- it's going to be fun. 11 If you have a smart president, no 12 problem. It's the enemy from within. All the 13 scum that we have to deal with that hate our 14 country, that's a bigger enemy than China and 15 Russia. And I'll tell you, as an example with 16 Russia, if I were president, the Ukraine-Russia 17 situation would have never happened, would have 18 never happened. 19 October 7th in Israel would have never 20 happened. Inflation would have never happened. 21 You had no inflation. Every day, Americans like 22 Cindy are living in fear all because Kamala 23 Harris decided to empty the slums and prison 24 cells of Caracas and many other places happening 25 all over the world. Every country.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p>
<p>1 happened because there we have it. And I promise 2 you this, Cindy, that Kamala Harris' reign of 3 terror ends the day I take the oath of office. 4 It ends. Your community will no longer 5 live in fear. You will once again have a 6 protector in the White House. I'm going to be a 7 protector. You know, I said, I think we're doing 8 very well with women. We're doing great in the 9 polls. We're winning in all of the polls just 10 about. But somebody said, women love my policy, 11 but they don't like me. 12 I think they do like me. I'll tell you 13 what. So, they said -- and I said a week ago, I 14 said, "I think women like me because I will be 15 your protector, and I protected you for four 16 years." We had no wars. We had no terrorism. 17 We had none of these things that you're seeing 18 today at levels that nobody in the world is 19 experiencing. 20 And I said, "I will be your protector." 21 They said, "Who the hell is he to the" -- but the 22 women didn't say that. The women want 23 protection. They don't want to have these people 24 pouring into their house. And you know where 25 else I protect you? Where I protect you very</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p>	<p>1 You know, prison populations all over 2 the world are down. Crime all over the world is 3 down because they take the world's criminals, 4 gang members, drug dealers, and they deposit them 5 into the United States bus after bus after bus. 6 In Venezuela, their crime rate went down 72 7 percent. You know why? Because they took the 8 criminals out of Caracas and they put them along 9 your border and they said, "If you ever come 10 back, we're going to kill you." 11 Think of that. And we have to live 12 with these animals, but we're not going to live 13 with them for long, you watch. Kamala's policy 14 is to release and resettle all illegals without 15 checking -- without check. You know, she's a 16 radical left person, just so you know. She's -- 17 there's no way. The biggest problem with her is 18 nobody knew who the hell she was. 19 They say, "Who's running?" "Harris." 20 "Harris. Who the hell is Harris?" They said, 21 "Kamala, the one that failed" -- the one that -- 22 was the first one out in the 22-person campaign 23 for the Democrat nomination, the one that wasn't 24 able to make it to Iowa, the one that quit first. 25 She was the first one out.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p>

<p>1 She's running, but she's more liberal 2 than Crazy Bernie Sanders. Can you believe it? 3 She's more liberal than Pocahontas. You know who 4 that is? Remember Pocahontas? She said she's 5 Indian. Why? "Because my cheekbones are high," 6 my mother told me. "My mother told me I had high 7 cheekbones, and therefore, I'm an Indian." 8 She made a living going around saying 9 she was an Indian, going to college, becoming a 10 professor. No, but I hit her very hard. That 11 was the end of her presidential campaign. 12 Thereby guaranteeing unfettered access for 13 Venezuelan gangs and thugs and criminals. And, 14 you know, we're talking a lot about Venezuela 15 because Aurora is really infected by Venezuela, 16 but they're coming from all countries, all 17 countries. 18 We have the great Tom Homan, central 19 casting, right? Tom Homan told me the other day. 20 He said, last month, it came -- they came from 21 168 countries all over the world. Most people 22 don't even know you had that. We actually have 23 more than 200, but they don't even know you had - 24 - but they came from 168 countries. 25 Most of them, criminals. And they</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 going to make it better, and we're going to make 2 it better really fast. Kamala is flying them. 3 Think of this. She said, "No." You know, about 4 two months ago, her and Sleepy Joe, they said, 5 "We're really getting killed by this issue. So, 6 let's toughen up the border a little bit." 7 All he would have had to do is say -- 8 you know, he keeps talking about policy and 9 "Trump told the Congress not to do this" and 10 that's not -- it's false. All he had to do is 11 one thing, call up Border Patrol, "This is the 12 president of the United States speaking. Close 13 the border." And the border's closed. 14 You don't need a bill. You don't need 15 a bill. But he doesn't want to do that. He 16 doesn't want to do that because they actually 17 want to have open borders. So, they had 21 18 million people come in. I think much more than 19 that, including the getaways. But think of this, 20 if you had four years of that, you would have 200 21 million people come in the whole world. 22 The country would be over. It would be 23 finished. It wouldn't be -- you wouldn't even 24 have a country anymore. You'd have a crime den. 25 She cannot be allowed to do this to our country.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 36</p>
<p>1 deposit them in our country, and we are supposed 2 to take it. And then the liberal philosophy is 3 we'll make them into wonderful people. No, 4 you're not going to make them into wonderful 5 people. Some people murdered -- many people 6 actually murdered more than three people. 7 The murderers that came in, many -- 8 some were on death row, and they said it's better 9 if we just let it go to America. This is what we 10 have, and they're in your community, but they're 11 going to be all over. And, you know, other 12 communities in other states because every state 13 is a border state now -- it's not Texas and 14 Arizona and -- it's every state is a border 15 state, every state. 16 And they're now -- and people are 17 living in deathly fear. Most of them -- a lot of 18 them have already been hit, but a lot of them 19 haven't. But they're going to be hit because 20 there's millions of them. They're all over the 21 place, and they're walking through our country 22 and they're going to be settled in a lot of these 23 states that never thought a thing like this could 24 happen. 25 It's only going to get worse, but we're</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 35</p>	<p>1 She shouldn't be the one that was chosen anyway 2 because she is, in fact -- by the way they chose 3 her -- a threat to democracy. 4 She really is. And just in case you 5 didn't know it, Biden hates her. I believe there 6 is a small possibility, very small, like 1 7 percent. There's a 1 percent possibility that he 8 hates her more than he hates Donald Trump. I 9 think he hates her. The last thing he thought -- 10 you know, he won the primary. In all fairness, 11 he won. 12 It was me against him. How about me? 13 I have to run against the guy. I spent \$150 14 million. I had to debate him. I debated the 15 guy. He went way, way down, and I thought it was 16 over. And then it's like a fighter. Then they 17 put a new person in her, and we don't know 18 anything about her. We have to -- but now we 19 learned, and now the people are learning, and 20 she's crashing like a rock. 21 Uh-oh. I just thought -- just a 22 thought from a very brilliant mind. They might 23 want to put a third person in that. Oh, no. 24 Please be nice to Kamala, to my people, I'm 25 telling. Everybody that's on the Trump team, be</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p>

<p>1 nice to Kamala because they're going to put a 2 third person in. Let's see. Who are they going 3 to put in next? This can only -- they keep 4 saying Hillary. 5 Hillary's coming. Oh, Hillary's back. 6 You know, it's interesting. If Trump talks about 7 the 2020 election, they say, "Indict him. He's a 8 conspiracy theorist." But Hillary is still 9 talking about 2016. She's like -- she has got 10 serious Trump derangement syndrome. She's got a 11 massive case of Trump derangement. 12 No. But you ever notice she talks 13 about it all the time, all those people that -- 14 but when anybody from the right talks even a 15 little bit, no, no. We don't forget. We're not 16 forgetting. Hillary is talking about it. I saw 17 her two days ago. "What they did to me?" Now 18 isn't it fun? Isn't it nice? Because I haven't 19 looked at these stupid things in about 15 20 minutes. 21 Isn't it nice to have a president that 22 doesn't need a teleprompter? Isn't that nice? 23 Isn't that -- look at it. Look at that. Would 24 some of you like to go outside and let them take 25 your place for a little while? I thought that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 of the border. No. No. If they ever did get 2 this, and I don't believe it can happen. I can't 3 because the American people ultimately get it 4 right this far. But if she ever did, you're 5 going to have hundreds of millions of people 6 coming in here, and you're not going to have it 7 and they're going to take your house. 8 That woman has a beautiful house over 9 there. I saw it actually. Enjoy it because you 10 won't have it long. They will take over your 11 house, just like Venezuela. You know, Venezuela 12 was a very successful country 20 years ago. It 13 was a rich, beautiful country. It was taken 14 over. And I used to talk about this. 15 I said, if they don't get it right, 16 you'll have Venezuela on steroids. Remember? 17 And that's what you're going to have if you don't 18 vote for Trump. I hate to say that. But if you 19 vote for Trump, you're going to have one hell of 20 a great country. We're going to build it back 21 and fast. Venezuelan illegals are the No. 22 2 most resettled population, but they 23 do it through their phone app. And on day one of 24 this Trump administration -- you know, if you 25 take a look at Springfield, Ohio, how about that?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p>
<p>1 would happen. She's flying them in now with 2 migrant flights. So, we thought, you know -- she 3 said, "We're going to sort of" -- so they 4 tightened it up a little bit. 5 So, their numbers looked a little -- 6 but it doesn't count. The migrant flights don't 7 count. So, they don't count. So, she forgot to 8 tell anybody that they have massive Boeing 9 aircraft flying them in one after another over 10 the border. So, she didn't close it. And then 11 they have the apps, right? How about the apps? 12 Where they have an app so that the gangs, the 13 people, the cartels, the heads of them, they can 14 call the app. 15 They call the second most resettled 16 population nobody's ever seen. They call up the 17 app and they ask, "Where do we drop the 18 illegals?" And people are on the other side and 19 they left that. She actually created an app, a 20 phone system where they can call up. I mean, 21 she's a criminal. She's a criminal. She really 22 is, if you think about it. 23 So, now we inform them that you didn't 24 close up the border because you have hundreds of 25 thousands of people being flown in over the top</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p>	<p>1 They have they have about 50,000 people. No 2 crime, beautiful community. Everything nice. 3 Schools, everything is nice. They dropped in 4 32,000 people that are really illegal. 5 You know, they did it in such a way 6 that they could make the case, you know? They 7 said they did it through probation. What's 8 probation? They took him in through probation. 9 So, I assume they assume they're, like, prisoners 10 or something, and therefore, they're legal. They 11 brought in 32,000 people into a community of 50, 12 a community that was a nice community. 13 And now, if you want to go to the 14 hospital, you can't get in. Your children can't 15 get into school. And what they're doing is 16 looking -- the mayor is a very nice man. I mean, 17 I think he's nice. He's trying to be nice. He's 18 looking for interpreters because they don't speak 19 the language of you and you and everybody in this 20 room. 21 It's a totally different language. So, 22 they're looking for interpreters and he's acting 23 like, "Yes, we're having a hard time hiring 24 interpreters." This community was hit with 25 32,000 illegal migrants. They have to go back to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p>


<p>1 where they came from. I'm sorry. Springfield, 2 Ohio. On day one of the Trump Organization, the 3 Trump Organization, when I founded it, it was 4 nice, but now it's great. 5 But I want to get back to the Trump 6 administration because the Trump administration 7 is going to do things like has really never been 8 done. We're going to clean this thing out. The 9 good thing about this four-year period -- it's a 10 horrible period. It's a shame it happened. It 11 should've never happened. Shouldn't have 12 happened. 13 But they've done so badly that we'll be 14 able to do it, and we'll be able to do it with 15 cheers because people see how bad it is and how 16 bad it's been run. And that's why there's far 17 more enthusiasm for this move, the greatest 18 movement ever. It's this -- and, by the way, if 19 it wasn't, the fake news would be headlines. 20 Donald Trump lied. When Biden would 21 get up and he'd say, "We're going to stop MAGA. 22 We're going to do something about MAGA." 23 Remember with the pink wall, he looked like the 24 devil, right? Remember the pink wall? "We're 25 going to stop, MAGA. I think it's called MAGA.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 in MS-13. That's another beautiful gang. 2 They're tough as hell. They've taken 3 them out by the thousands. She wants to end ICE. 4 She doesn't want to have ICE. But they informed 5 us that over the last short period of time, 6 13,099 illegal aliens, convicted of murder, are 7 at large and dropped into the United States 8 against their wishes, against our Border Patrol's 9 wish -- the wishes of our Border Patrol. 10 They were saying, "Please don't do 11 this. Please don't do this." Even as the New 12 York Times, which is totally corrupt I mean, I 13 can't stand that paper. I can't stand that. You 14 know what you do with the Times? When you read a 15 story, just think the opposite. They're the 16 enemy of the people. They're really -- New York 17 Times is the enemy. 18 Washington Post is the enemy of the 19 people, too. I don't understand it. Why? Why? 20 And then they lose credibility. Eventually, they 21 go out of business. I call it the failing New 22 York Times. But even as the New York Times 23 recently reported, the TDA Venezuelan prison gang 24 has, "sneaked" into the United States among the 25 millions of migrants who have crossed the border</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p>
<p>1 We're going to stop MAGA." And I said, "Joe, 2 it's called Make America Great Again," and he 3 wants to stop it. 4 He wants to stop it. "We're going to 5 stop that." But the border will be sealed. The 6 invasion will be stopped. The migrant flights 7 will end, and Kamala's app for illegals will be 8 shut down immediately within 24 hours. All 9 within 24 hours. And, you know, I've always had 10 an ability to do a lot of things, so I got to do 11 something else in the first day. 12 I'm going to do all those things. The 13 border, we're going to make it strong very 14 quickly. We're going to get people out that are 15 criminals and horrible people, but we're also 16 going to do something else. Drill, baby, drill. 17 Two things. On that same day, we will begin the 18 task of finding and deporting every single 19 illegal alien gang member from our country. 20 We'll get them out. This will be a 21 major, national undertaking according to newly 22 published data from ICE. The great patriots of 23 ICE, I call them. These guys are tough as hell, 24 I tell you. They should be fighting for Dana 25 White, UFC, ICE. You got to see them. They go</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p>	<p>1 and is peddling drugs, guns, and women all across 2 the 50 states from the urban centers like New 3 York and Chicago to Florida beaches to the once 4 tranquil middle America. 5 It was once tranquil. You were once 6 tranquil. In Colorado, the gang even got a green 7 light to shoot police officers. Did you know 8 that the gang got the okay to kill your police? 9 You know that. By the way, that's the New York 10 Times. That's not me. That's the New York Times 11 saying that. They got the green light to kill 12 your police. 13 Just days ago, it was an amazing day. 14 I was in a small town, Prairie Du Chien in 15 Wisconsin. You know, we're leading Wisconsin by 16 four and a half points too, right? They have a 17 similar problem. You know, almost all states 18 have this. You know, just so we set it straight, 19 Aurora's got a lot of publicity, but you have 20 states that have a bigger problem than Aurora. 21 You have -- that people aren't talking 22 about. A lot of the people that run the states, 23 they don't want to talk about it. They want to 24 try and solve it, but they can't because they're 25 not tough enough. You need very tough people</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p>

<p>1 like ICE, like military. You need very tough 2 people to solve it. They can't -- you know, 3 you'll have a sheriff with one or two men, and 4 you'll have 25 migrants with weaponry that they 5 haven't even seen in some cases.</p> <p>6 No, you need help. But they don't want 7 to talk about it because the public relations is 8 so bad for the town or the little city that they 9 run or the big city. Look at Chicago. Look at 10 New York. Look at Los Angeles. What's happening 11 to it? In Wisconsin, where last month an illegal 12 alien member of this ruthless gang was arrested 13 for holding a mother and a daughter captive 14 against their will and sexually assaulting them 15 again and again and again.</p> <p>16 In Houston in June, 12-year-old Jocelyn 17 Nungaray was kidnapped, tied up, and assaulted 18 for two hours under the bridge before she was 19 murdered by two Venezuelan TDAs, these gang 20 members who Kamala Harris had ordered -- Kamala 21 Harris had ordered and let into the United 22 States. Totally unvetted. Nobody knew who they 23 were.</p> <p>24 Totally unvetted. Come on in. You 25 just come on in. In New York City, another gang</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 I'm announcing today that upon taking 2 office, we will have an Operation Aurora at the 3 federal level to expedite the removals of these 4 savage gangs, and I will invoke the Alien Enemies 5 Act of 1798. Think of that, 1798. This was put 6 there 1798. That's a long time ago, right? To 7 target and dismantle every migrant criminal 8 network operating on American soil.</p> <p>9 Who would have ever thought that a 10 president or a future president would ever have 11 to stand here and say such things? Who would 12 think that that's even possible to have to do? 13 So, many things are changed in the last four 14 years, but that's the state of our country now 15 after Kamala and Joe Biden have just absolutely 16 destroyed our country.</p> <p>17 We're a country in tremendous distress. 18 We're a failing country. We're laughed at all 19 over the world. We will send elite squads of 20 ICE, Border Patrol, and federal law enforcement 21 officers to hunt down, arrest, and deport every 22 last illegal alien gang member until there is not 23 a single one left in this country.</p> <p>24 And if they come back into our country, 25 they will be told it is an automatic 10-year</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p>
<p>1 member recently shot two New York City police 2 officers, hitting one in the chest and the other 3 in the leg. They were really, really badly hurt, 4 probably going to make it. And just last week, 5 police arrested over a dozen members of TDA, the 6 Venezuelan gang, who had taken over yet another 7 apartment complex in San Antonio.</p> <p>8 They're, like, in the real estate 9 business like I used to be. They take over a lot 10 of real estate, but they do it by gunpoint. I 11 had to go borrow money. I had to see the banks. 12 This is a wonderful deal. Would you like to? 13 But they just walk in with guns and take it over. 14 It's much quicker. It's a horrible -- in San 15 Antonio -- and terrorized its residents to a 16 level that they've never seen before.</p> <p>17 San Antonio police very aptly named 18 their law enforcement effort Operation Aurora 19 because Aurora was the one that was first and got 20 all that publicity. Operation Aurora. In honor 21 of Jocelyn Nungaray, Laken Riley, beautiful 22 Laken, Rachel Moran, and all of the others that 23 are dead and/or mortally wounded at the hands of 24 migrants who should never have been allowed into 25 our country.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p>	<p>1 sentence in jail with no possibility of parole. 2 And I'm hereby calling for the death penalty for 3 any migrant that kills an American citizen or a 4 law enforcement officer. With your vote, we will 5 achieve complete and total victory over these 6 sadistic monsters.</p> <p>7 It's going to go very quickly. 8 Remember our local police? They're great. I 9 know them so well. They've been restricted from 10 operating. They're great. They know everything 11 about every one of them. I said, "Oh, how will 12 you ever find them?" The local police know 13 everyone. They know their middle names. They 14 know their serial numbers, where they live.</p> <p>15 No. And they want to do their job. 16 They're done. You have no idea how many police 17 officers say, "Sir, we're going to indemnify them 18 against any prosecutions" because they get 19 prosecuted if they do their work. Going to pass 20 that. It'll pass so fast. If they do their job, 21 they get prosecuted by their own people.</p> <p>22 They get sued by the people that won't 23 take care of the criminals, some of the DAs that 24 won't do the -- think of it, and AGs. They won't 25 go after the criminal, but they'll go after our</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p>

<p>1 police officers if they do the job. We will take 2 back our suburbs. We'll take back our cities and 3 towns, and we will take back our country, and we 4 will do it very, very quickly. 5 What Kamala Harris -- and remember -- I 6 remember when Joe -- he didn't want to do it. He 7 was too tired. He didn't want to do it. I like 8 to do it myself. And by the way, how good is JD 9 Vance? Is he great? I know JD, JD is going to 10 be saying, "Sir, let me do it. I want to do it, 11 sir." And if he did it, it would be done right. 12 But I'd say, "JD, I want to do it. 13 We'd have an argument over who's going to do it." 14 It'll be done right. But JD was great. He was 15 great the other night exposing that total moron. 16 Man, can you imagine? How about at a debate, a 17 guy calls himself a knucklehead? He says he's a 18 knucklehead, and he is a knucklehead when you get 19 right down. 20 What a team that is. So, Joe Biden is 21 considered the worst president in the history of 22 our country. They are considered the worst 23 administration in the history of our country, and 24 the only one that's happy is Jimmy Carter because 25 by comparison, he looked like a brilliant</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 that comes to mind. 2 REPORTER: More than 13,000 illegal 3 immigrants convicted of murder have been caught 4 at the border and then released into the United 5 States. 6 ENRIQUE ACEVEDO: An Afghan national is 7 in custody today after being accused of plotting 8 an election-day terrorist attack. The suspect 9 entered the U.S. on a special immigrant visa. 10 REPORTER: Gut-wrenching new details in 11 the murder of Georgia nursing student, Laken 12 Riley. 13 REPORTER: The illegal immigrant 14 suspect who, cops say, committed the heinous 15 murder is a Venezuelan national who crossed the 16 unsecured southern border back in 2022. 17 REPORTER: Two men, investigators say, 18 are in the country illegally from Venezuela are 19 charged with capital murder in the death of 20 Jocelyn Nungaray. 21 REPORTER: A fifth illegal immigrant 22 accused of attacking two New York City police 23 officers over the weekend showed no remorse or 24 regret. 25 SUNNY HOSTIN: Would you have done</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p>
<p>1 president. Okay? Much better. No. 2 He was much better. What Kamala Harris 3 has done to our border is a crime and an atrocity 4 of the highest order. But even after all of the 5 pain and suffering she's caused when Kamala was 6 asked this week, if she would do anything 7 different than Biden, she choked like a dog. She 8 said not one thing. I would -- so she wouldn't 9 have done anything different. 10 Let's take a look at this video. 11 [BEGIN VIDEO] 12 SUNNY HOSTIN: Would you have done 13 something differently than President Biden during 14 the past four years? 15 KAMALA HARRIS: There is not a thing 16 that comes to mind. 17 MARK SCHMITZ: I stood there on the 18 tarmac watching you check your watch. 19 ANDREA MITCHELL: The chaotic and 20 deadly U.S. evacuation from Afghanistan stunned 21 Americans and the world and cost the lives of 22 thirteen U.S. soldiers. 23 SUNNY HOSTIN: Would you have done 24 something differently? 25 KAMALA HARRIS: There is not a thing</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p>	<p>1 something differently? 2 KAMALA HARRIS: There is not a thing 3 that comes to mind. 4 REPORTER: Only 18 percent say the 5 economy is in excellent or good condition. U.S. 6 inflation has hit a new 40-year high, increasing 7 by 9.1 percent over the financial year. 8 REPORTER: The cost of homes have 9 spiked. Home buyers need to earn 80 percent more 10 than they did in 2020 to afford a house. 11 DANA BASH: Were you the last person in 12 the room? 13 KAMALA HARRIS: Yes. 14 [END VIDEOTAPE] 15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Can you 16 imagine? I watched that, and I said, well, this 17 is going to be a long answer because she's got -- 18 you know, she's changed 15 policies. She was in 19 favor of gun confiscation. Every single thing 20 that you don't want, 15 times. I said this -- 21 and she changed. Nobody's ever -- if you change 22 one thing, you're in trouble. 23 She did -- every single thing. But 24 every single thing she changed, she would end up 25 doing, including banning fracking, which is going</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 53</p>

<p>1 to drive up cost, which -- and hence, I'm leading 2 Pennsylvania by a lot. That would be the end of 3 Pennsylvania. That would be the end of 4 Pennsylvania. But that statement, "I can't think 5 of a thing I changed from Joe Biden," the worst 6 president ever.</p> <p>7 She's not going to change. No, she 8 choked. I thought this was going to be a long 9 answer. Long, beautiful -- the weave. I thought 10 she'd do a weave like Trump does. You know, 11 weave and then always come back into what you're 12 doing. You need a great memory for that. She 13 doesn't have that. But what she said is 14 disqualifying.</p> <p>15 If she had any honor, she would drop 16 out of the race right now and resign the vice 17 presidency. A disgrace, because she's -- what 18 she has done to the country is unthinkable. It 19 was just announced yesterday that inflation came 20 in substantially higher than expected last month, 21 double what was predicted with much of the gain 22 coming from food prices going up, rent and 23 housing costs going up, and car prices going 24 through the roof.</p> <p>25 Four years ago, when I left office, we</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 have some wonderful people. And I want you to 2 take a look at military the way it was, where we 3 won two world wars, where we had something known 4 as Fort Bragg, where the names were changed. We 5 win two wars out of Fort Bragg, and they want to 6 change the name.</p> <p>7 But where they changed the name, they 8 changed the name out of places that we won a lot 9 of military battles, wars. And I thought you 10 should see, the way it sort of was, you get a 11 pretty heavy dose of this. And I saw it the 12 other day. I said, "We got to put it up." Go 13 ahead, please.</p> <p>14 [VIDEOTAPE]</p> <p>15 DRILL SERGEANT: You little scumbag. I 16 got your name. I got your ass. You will not 17 laugh. You will not cry. You will learn by the 18 numbers.</p> <p>19 MAN: Happy pride. Happy pride 20 month. And actually, let's declare it a summer 21 of pride.</p> <p>22 DRILL SERGEANT: So, you're a killer.</p> <p>23 MARINE: Sir, yes, sir.</p> <p>24 DRILL SERGEANT: Let me see your war 25 face.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p>
<p>1 had no inflation. We had virtually -- think of 2 it. We had no inflation virtually for my whole 3 term, four years. We had the greatest economy in 4 the history of our country. We never had an 5 economy like that. And we were energy- 6 independent. How does that sound? We're energy- 7 independent.</p> <p>8 Now we're buying our oil from Venezuela 9 and other countries. Under Biden and Harris, the 10 economy has been a disaster. The worst inflation 11 in history, costing the typical family \$29,000 12 and higher prices. Think of that, 29,000. But I 13 think to me, the worst thing of all when she says 14 she wouldn't have changed -- this is something 15 that if it was me, I mean, you'd never see me 16 again.</p> <p>17 I really believe it. Kamala lost 18 325,000 migrant children who are now dead or in 19 slavery. They're gone. She's missing 325,000 20 children. Their parents are looking -- they're 21 never going to see their parents again. They 22 came in. They were taken in. And they're either 23 dead in slavery or just plain missing.</p> <p>24 It's a horrible thing. And I thought 25 I'd put this up because it's a beautiful day. We</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p>	<p>1 MARINE: Sir.</p> <p>2 DRILL SERGEANT: You got a war face? 3 Ahhh, that's a war face. Now let me see your war 4 face.</p> <p>5 MARINE: Ahhh.</p> <p>6 DRILL SERGEANT: Bullshit. You didn't 7 convince me. Let me see your real war face. You 8 will be a weapon. You will be a minister of 9 death, praying for war. But until that day, you 10 are pukes. You are the lowest form of life on 11 earth. You are not even killing fucking pigs. 12 You are nothing but unorganized, grab-assitic 13 pieces of amphibian shit.</p> <p>14 It wasn't me like the best party you 15 ran down to practice your mama's ass and ended up 16 as a brown stain on the mattress. I love working 17 for Uncle Sam.</p> <p>18 MARINES: I love working for Uncle Sam.</p> <p>19 DRILL SERGEANT: Lets me know just who 20 I am.</p> <p>21 MARINES: Lets me know just who I am.</p> <p>22 DRILL SERGEANT: One, two, three, four, 23 United States, Marine Corps.</p> <p>24 MARINE: One, two, three, four, United 25 States Marine Corps.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p>

<p>1 [END VIDEO] 2 [AUDIENCE CHANTS "USA"] 3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: And you see 4 all of that, and Kamala says she wouldn't change 5 one thing from the worst president in the history 6 of our country. She wouldn't change one thing. 7 The only way to end this suffering is to vote for 8 change this November. You got to vote for 9 change. Emergency rooms in Denver, beautiful 10 Denver, have been, think of this, 6,000 percent 11 increase in patients, 6000 percent increase. 12 You're not going to get a room, you 13 know, when you go to hospitals. You're not going 14 to get a room. Someday, you don't know it 15 because you hopefully won't need a hospital. But 16 if you do, you're not going to be able to get in. 17 They come in from Colombia, from Honduras, from 18 Ecuador, from Venezuela. They come in for many 19 you cannot get a room. 20 They can't get a room. A hospital only 21 15 miles outside Aurora has been overwhelmed by 22 20,000 visits from illegal aliens, costing the 23 hospital over \$10 million, and those costs are 24 being passed on to you directly. Before Kamala 25 Harris, before she came, Denver schools enrolled</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p>	<p>1 And as you know, FEMA, which has 2 totally gotten out of control and away from its 3 mission -- it had a mission, a big mission. You 4 know what that mission was, to save people in 5 storms and other things. Has spent billions and 6 billions of dollars illegally allowing people to 7 come into our country and destroying our once 8 beautiful way of life. 9 Yet hurricane victims from North 10 Carolina, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, 11 Tennessee, Louisiana, Texas, all over our 12 country, when you have storms all over our 13 country, different kinds of storms, different 14 kinds of catastrophes, they can't get housing or 15 rescues, and they're offered pennies on the 16 dollar. 17 They're offered pennies on the dollar. 18 These people that have gone through hell are 19 offered pennies on the dollar from Kamala and 20 Joe, and yet we give hundreds of billions of 21 dollars from countries that people have never 22 even heard of in this country. And now Kamala 23 wants to provide amnesty and citizenship to the 24 21 million illegal aliens she let in, including 25 murderers, gang members, drug lords, human</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p>
<p>1 an average -- listen to this, though. 2 Denver schools, this is the way it used 3 to be, enrolled an average of 500 new students 4 every year. Earlier this year, it was reported 5 that they were enrolling 500 new students every 6 two weeks, most of them coming in from South 7 American countries. They don't speak our 8 language, and they don't even want to be here, 9 frankly. 10 Many of them don't even want to be 11 here. In Aurora, nearly 3,000 illegal migrant 12 children have been placed into your elementary 13 schools, middle schools, and high schools once 14 again at your expense, and at the cost of more 15 opportunity for them and no opportunity for your 16 kids. They're not -- your kids can't even get 17 into their own schools. 18 Kids that went to a school aren't even 19 able to get back in. They're taking care of 20 these people before they take care of our 21 children. These massive new burdens on our 22 education and health care systems are being 23 experienced by communities all across our country 24 and are destroying your children's education, 25 safety, and indeed destroying their lives.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p>	<p>1 traffickers, not to mention the millions of 2 getaways, and all of the others that very smart 3 leaders have viciously thrown out of their 4 countries. 5 These are very smart leaders. I would 6 do it. I would have done it faster than them, I 7 tell you. Soon as I thought of it, I said, you 8 know, that's -- remember I said it three years 9 ago. I said that's going to happen if they have 10 open borders, and I was right. But who Kamala 11 has allowed into our country at the expense of 12 our children, our mothers, our fathers, our 13 grandparents, our uncles, and our aunts. 14 Under the Trump administration, we will 15 put American citizens first, American children 16 first, American patients first, American 17 taxpayers first, American workers first, and 18 American communities first. We will put 19 communists, Marxists, and fascists last, and they 20 will always be last. I will end catch and 21 release. 22 I will restore Remain in Mexico. 23 Remember, I got it done with the Mexican 24 government, Remain in Mexico. They couldn't come 25 into this country and they had to remain in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 61</p>

<p>1 Mexico. You think that was easy to get from 2 Mexico, was it? But I got it. I got everything. 3 I will bring back Title 42, medical rejections. 4 People come in, they're very sick. 5 Very sick. They're coming into our country. 6 They're very, very, very sick with highly 7 contagious disease, and they're let into our 8 country to infect our country. And they're 9 coming in at numbers that nobody's ever seen 10 before. I will send Congress a bill to ban all 11 sanctuary cities in our country, including 12 Denver. 13 And we will begin the largest 14 deportation operation in the history of the 15 United States. We will close the border. We 16 will stop the invasion of illegals into our 17 country. We will defend our territory. We will 18 not be conquered. We will not be conquered. We 19 will reclaim our sovereignty, and Colorado will 20 vote for Trump as a protest and signal to the 21 world that we are not going to take it anymore. 22 We're not going to take it anymore. I 23 will liberate Colorado. I will give you back 24 your freedom and your life, and together, we will 25 make America powerful again. We will make</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 CERTIFICATION 2 3 I, Sonya Ledanski Hyde, certify that the 4 foregoing transcript is a true and accurate 5 record of the proceedings. 6 7 8 9  10 11 Veritext Legal Solutions 12 330 Old Country Road 13 Suite 300 14 Mineola, NY 11501 15 16 Date: February 18, 2025 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 64</p>
<p>1 America wealthy again. We will make America 2 healthy again. We will make America strong 3 again. We will make America proud again. 4 We will make America safe again, and we 5 will make America great again. Thank you, 6 Colorado. Vote for Trump. God bless you. God 7 bless you, all. Thank you. 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 63</p>	

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October 27, 2024
Madison Square Garden Speech
President Donald Trump

<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Thank you, 2 everybody. Thank you. Thank you very much, 3 everybody. Thank you very much to a very popular 4 former First Lady, hopefully First Lady again. 5 And I just want to say a very big hello 6 to a special place, New York, and to an 7 incredible arena, Madison Square Garden. 8 Incredible. And then we have all of the people 9 that could fill it up ten times. Ten times. You 10 take a look at outside what's going on all the 11 way down to the river, the beautiful, beautiful 12 Hudson River. They're outside watching this now 13 at levels that nobody's ever seen before. 14 They've never had it. 15 And I want to thank Jim Dolan. He's 16 been incredible. He's been just incredible. The 17 job they've done. The job they've done. Thank 18 you. 19 But I'm thrilled to be back in the city 20 I love and thousands of proud, hardworking 21 American patriots. You're with me. We've always 22 been together. And I'd like to begin by asking a 23 very simple question. Are you better off now 24 than you were four years ago? 25 I'm here today with a message of hope</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 but now the fate of our nation is in your hands. 2 Next Tuesday, you have to stand up and you have 3 to tell Kamala Harris that you've done a terrible 4 job, that crooked Joe Biden has done a terrible 5 job. You've destroyed our country. We're not 6 going to take it anymore. Kamala, you're fired. 7 Get out. Get out. You're fired. 8 Early voting is underway in every swing 9 state, and we are setting all-time records of 10 voting. I tell you what, I don't want to talk 11 about it. But we have to keep it going. We've 12 got to get out and vote. We just have to get 13 out. And who would have thought this was going 14 to happen? We're leading in every swing state. 15 But it doesn't mean a thing. It only means how 16 are we doing at the end? So, we have nine days 17 from now and we're going to defeat Kamala Harris 18 and we're going to win back the beautiful White 19 House and we're going to make America great 20 again. And it's going to happen fast. Thank 21 you. 22 In less than four years, Kamala Harris 23 has shattered our middle class. She cast the 24 deciding votes that launched the worst inflation 25 in the history of our country. She cost the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p>
<p>1 for all Americans. With your vote in this 2 election, I will end inflation. I will stop the 3 invasion of criminals coming into our country. 4 And I will bring back the American dream. We 5 need the American dream to come back home. 6 Our country will be bigger, better, 7 bolder, richer, safer, and stronger than ever 8 before. This election is a choice between 9 whether we will have four more years of gross 10 incompetence and failure or whether we will begin 11 the four greatest years in the history of our 12 country. 13 We will achieve success that no one can 14 imagine. We will have the strongest economy, the 15 most secure borders, the safest cities, the most 16 powerful military, the best trade deals, and we 17 will dominate the frontiers of science, medicine, 18 business, technology, and space. 19 And I'm asking you to be excited about 20 the future of our country again. I'm asking you 21 to dream big again. We're going to dream big 22 again. We haven't been dreaming big at all. 23 This will be America's new golden age. It's 24 going to happen quickly too, very quickly. 25 Every problem facing us can be solved,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p>	<p>1 typical American family over three thousand 2 dollars in a short period, but over thirty 3 thousand dollars over the last three years. 4 She killed fifty thousand manufacturing 5 jobs this year alone. Now, Kamala wants to raise 6 the typical family taxes by nearly three thousand 7 dollars a year and impose a thirty three percent 8 tax hike on all domestic production. If Kamala 9 Harris gets four more years, our economy can 10 never recover. 11 If I win, we will quickly build the 12 greatest economy in the history of the world. 13 Which is what we had in our last term. We will 14 rapidly defeat inflation, and we will very simply 15 make America affordable again. We're going to 16 make it affordable. 17 I will massively cut taxes for workers 18 and small businesses, and we will have no tax on 19 tips, no tax on overtime and no tax on Social 20 Security benefits for our seniors. And I'm 21 announcing a new policy today that I will support 22 a tax credit for family caregivers who take care 23 of a parent or a loved one. It's about time that 24 they were recognized. They add so much to our 25 country and are never spoken of ever, ever, ever.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p>

<p>1 But they're going to be spoken of now. Thank you 2 all very much.</p> <p>3 I'll also make interest on car loans 4 fully tax deductible, but only for cars made in 5 America. Have to be made in America and we will 6 achieve energy independence, and we will do 7 something we wanted so badly. We're going to do 8 some, you know, we're going to do "front row 9 Joe's." You know, I got front row Joe's here. I 10 got the ladies from North Carolina. Number 249. 11 This is the 200. And you look so beautiful.</p> <p>12 We have a lot of people. They followed 13 us. But we're going to do something. The ladies 14 can tell you what we're going to do. We're going 15 to drill a baby drill. And I will terminate the 16 Green New Deal scam, and we'll cut your energy 17 prices in half. Fifty percent within one year 18 from January 20th. Is the fake news hearing 19 that? Whoa. Look how much. Wow. That's a lot 20 of fake news. That is a lot of fake news. Look 21 at that. Wow. That's got to be a record, Mr. 22 Speaker. I think that's a record. That is a lot 23 of fakers back there.</p> <p>24 To bring back millions of jobs, we will 25 give our companies the lowest taxes, the lowest</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 the richest and most powerful nation on the face 2 of the earth.</p> <p>3 As we rescue our economy, I will also 4 restore our borders. There's never been anything 5 like it. It's bigger than inflation. It's 6 bigger than the economy. What they're doing to 7 our country, they're allowing criminals from all 8 over the world to enter our country.</p> <p>9 Over the past four years, Kamala Harris 10 has orchestrated the most egregious betrayal that 11 any leader in American history has ever inflicted 12 upon our people. She has violated her oath, 13 eradicated our sovereign border, and unleashed an 14 army of migrant gangs who are waging a campaign 15 of violence and terror against our citizens. 16 There has never been anything like it anywhere in 17 the world for any country.</p> <p>18 Kamala has imported criminal migrants 19 from prisons and jails, insane asylums, and 20 mental institutions from all around the world, 21 from Venezuela to the Congo. A lot of people are 22 coming from the Congo prisons. They're coming 23 from all over the world. Over the last month, 24 181 countries violated our laws. And she has 25 resettled them into your communities to prey upon</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p>
<p>1 energy costs, the lowest regulatory burdens, and 2 free access to the best and biggest market on the 3 planet. Remember this. If we keep going like 4 this, we won't have the biggest and the best. We 5 won't have a market. We won't have a country.</p> <p>6 But only for those who make their 7 product here in the USA and hire American workers 8 for the job. And if these companies don't make 9 their products here, then they will pay a very 10 stiff tariff when they send their products into 11 the United States for the privilege of competing 12 with our workers and our now protected companies. 13 We're going to protect our companies. They're 14 not leaving anymore. They're not leaving 15 anymore.</p> <p>16 We're also going to pass the Trump 17 Reciprocal Trade Act, meaning if China or any 18 other country charges us 100 or 200 percent tax 19 or tariff, we will then charge them a 100 or 200 20 percent tax or tariff. It's called an eye for an 21 eye. And I will never apologize for defending 22 America. I will protect our workers. I will 23 protect our jobs. I will protect our borders. I 24 will protect our great families. And I will 25 protect the birthright of our children to live in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 innocent American citizens.</p> <p>2 But the day I take the oath of office, 3 the migrant invasion of our country ends, and the 4 restoration of our country begins. One of the 5 deadliest and most vicious migrant gangs that 6 Kamala has imported into our country is the 7 savage Venezuelan prison gang. Nice group of 8 people. They got together in prison. The worst 9 prison in the world, they say. It's called Tren 10 de Aragua. And that is taking over apartment 11 complexes and unleashing a violent killing spree 12 all over America, especially in Aurora, Colorado, 13 where we have a governor who's petrified of them. 14 And maybe he should be. But now they've even 15 taken over Times Square. Take a look.</p> <p>16 [VIDEO CLIP PLAYS] 17 WOMAN 1: "Border's deadly 18 consequences. 19 MAN 1: Border crisis. 20 MAN 2: Record high crossings are 21 putting a strain on cities across America. 22 MAN 3: It is a full-blown invasion. 23 WOMAN 2: Armed Venezuelan gang members 24 storming an apartment complex in Aurora, 25 Colorado.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p>

<p>1 MAN 4: And when people talk about 2 migrant crime, this is what they're talking 3 about.</p> <p>4 WOMAN 3: San Antonio, Texas, just one 5 of the latest cities to have apartment complexes 6 taken over by members of the Venezuelan gang.</p> <p>7 MAN 5: Biden and Harris have created a 8 program to bring them in on a humanitarian tour.</p> <p>9 KAMALA HARRIS: I am in favor of saying 10 that we're not going to treat people who are 11 undocumented cross-borders criminals.</p> <p>12 MAN 6: More than 13,000 illegal 13 immigrants convicted of murder have been released 14 into the United States.</p> <p>15 WOMAN 4: My 20-year-old daughter, 16 Kayla Hamilton, was murdered in her own room. 17 Kayla's murderer was apprehended by border 18 patrol, crossed in illegally into the U.S.</p> <p>19 MAN 7: Kayla's murderer had been 20 improperly released into the United States.</p> <p>21 KAMALA HARRIS: Abolish ICE. Yeah, we 22 need to probably think about starting from 23 scratch.</p> <p>24 MAN 8: More than a dozen people 25 suspected of being Tren de Aragua gang members</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 MAN 13: The men threatened to cut off 2 her fingers if she did not cooperate. Manuel 3 Hernandez-Hernandez was booked by Colleyville 4 police just two days earlier and released the day 5 before the robbery.</p> <p>6 MAN 14: A Peruvian gang leader who was 7 wanted for 23 murders, who was arrested by border 8 patrol near Rolla, Texas, then released into 9 America."</p> <p>10 [VIDEO CLIP CONCLUDES]</p> <p>11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: That's who 12 we're allowing into our country. We're not going 13 to have a country any longer. That's who we're 14 allowing in.</p> <p>15 The United States is now an occupied 16 country, but it will soon be an occupied country 17 no longer. Not going to be happening. Not going 18 to be happening. November 5th, 2024, nine days 19 from now will be Liberation Day in America. It's 20 going to be Liberation Day.</p> <p>21 On day one, I will launch the largest 22 deportation program in American history to get 23 these criminals out. I will rescue every city 24 and town that has been invaded and conquered, and 25 we will put these vicious and bloodthirsty</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p>
<p>1 right here in San Antonio.</p> <p>2 WOMAN 5: The gang members had been 3 terrorized in the apartment complex.</p> <p>4 WOMAN 6: New details in the murder of 5 Laken Riley.</p> <p>6 WOMAN 7: The illegal immigrant suspect 7 who cops say committed the heinous murder is a 8 Venezuelan national.</p> <p>9 MAN 9: He was paroled and released 10 into the country by the Biden administration.</p> <p>11 MAN 10: If they had all been properly 12 vetted, that probably wouldn't have happened.</p> <p>13 WOMAN 8: Two men investigators say are 14 in the country illegally from Venezuela are 15 charged with capital murder and the death of 16 Jocelyn Nungaray.</p> <p>17 MAN 11: Martinez and I have wrapped 18 his arms around Jocelyn's neck took off her head 19 and climbed on top of her, later strangled 20 Jocelyn to death and then tied up her hands and 21 feet.</p> <p>22 MAN 12: Court documents suggest a 23 group of men arrested for beating and robbing a 24 Dallas woman last month are members of a 25 Venezuelan street gang.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p>	<p>1 criminals in jail. We're going to kick them the 2 hell out of our country as fast as possible.</p> <p>3 And to expedite removals of Trinidad 4 and Tobago and other savage gangs like MS-13, 5 which is equally vicious, I will invoke the Alien 6 Enemies Act of 1798. Think of that. That's how 7 far back. That's when they had law and order. 8 They had some tough ones. Think of the Alien 9 Enemies Act of 1798 -- you hear that, Mr. 10 Speaker, get ready -- to target and dismantle 11 every migrant criminal network operating on 12 American soil. And there are lots of them. We 13 don't have the same country anymore. You know 14 that. And you know, when you look at the polls 15 and they say about the economy and they have all 16 these different things, the worst nightmare that 17 we're facing is what they've done to us on our 18 borders.</p> <p>19 We had the safest border in the world. 20 In fact, there's a chart, which I hope they have, 21 because I didn't tell them I wanted it. But 22 there's a chart that I love very much because I 23 wouldn't be here without it. I'm in love with 24 it. I love that chart. Even if it had bad 25 numbers, I would have loved that chart. But it</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p>

<p>1 does. It has great numbers. 2 And if you look at the arrow on the 3 bottom, you'll see that was the day I left 4 office. That was the lowest illegal immigration 5 that we've ever had in recorded history, the 6 recorded history of our country. And then look 7 at it. It was like an Elon Musk rocket ship. 8 Look at what happened. Look at what happened 9 after that. And if they come back into our 10 country, it's an automatic 10 years in jail with 11 no possibility of parole. 12 And I'm hereby calling for the death 13 penalty for any migrant that kills an American 14 citizen or law enforcement officer. Under 15 Kamala, America is a sanctuary for criminals and 16 for illegal aliens that are in our country 17 illegally. I will immediately ban all sanctuary 18 cities in the United States. 19 Kamala's gross incompetence 20 disqualifies her from being president of the 21 United States of America. She is grossly 22 incompetent. All you have to do is look at her 23 interviews. Look at what she did the other night 24 on fake news, CNN. Just take a look. She 25 couldn't answer a question. She's unfit for</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 we said, what's going on? Those planes, a lot of 2 planes going over there. What are they? They 3 would fly them into the middle of our country, 4 our beautiful, beautiful country. 5 And you know what happened? You take a 6 look at Springfield, Ohio. Think of this. Think 7 of this. Where 30,000 illegal migrants were put 8 into a town of 50,000 people. No, no place can 9 withstand that. Or take a look at Aurora in 10 Colorado. 11 Colorado is going to vote for us. You 12 know why? Typically, they go a little bit the 13 other way. Of course, with their voting system, 14 I'm not so sure about that. But you know why? 15 Because they tried to throw the leading candidate 16 of both parties, meaning me, I was leading both 17 parties, off the ballot. And the people of 18 Colorado, including Democrats, are very angry 19 about it. They are a threat to democracy, to use 20 their term. 21 Isn't it nice to have somebody that's 22 your president that doesn't need a teleprompter? 23 We haven't been on a teleprompter for a long 24 time. I haven't been on this teleprompter. You 25 know, it is nice. You saw the other day where</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p>
<p>1 office. Everyone knows it. No one respects her. 2 No one trusts her. No one takes her seriously. 3 Everyone knows she is a very low IQ individual. 4 From humiliating our country in 5 Afghanistan, to the war in Ukraine, to the 6 nightmare on our border, to her inflation 7 catastrophe, all done in conjunction with Sleepy 8 Joe. But he was largely sleeping, wasn't he? 9 After 4:00, it's time to go to bed. To his and 10 her egregious hurricane response, the worst 11 response in North Carolina and other states since 12 Katrina, but I think it was even worse than 13 Katrina. 14 They haven't even responded in North 15 Carolina. They haven't even responded. There's 16 nobody. They don't see any FEMA. You know why? 17 They spent their money on bringing in illegal 18 migrants, so they didn't have money for Georgia 19 and North Carolina and Alabama and Tennessee and 20 Florida and South Carolina. They didn't have any 21 money for them. 22 They spent all of their money on 23 bringing in illegal immigrants and flying them in 24 by beautiful jet planes. They flew in. We just 25 found out about a year and a half ago. Remember,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p>	<p>1 Kamala got a little stuck on the teleprompter, 2 went a little bad and stopped on her. You have 3 to be, you know, if you're a politician, you have 4 to be able to handle that. 5 Remember, you have to do the weave, he 6 says. You got to do more than the weave. But it 7 happens a lot as a politician. It happens. I 8 mean, we have so many politicians here, great 9 ones, really good. Some are not so good, but 10 great ones. 11 And when Newt or when the speaker or 12 when Tommy Tuberville, who's here someplace, the 13 great senator from Alabama, or when any one of 14 our literally 75. By the way, should I introduce 15 all of them by name? I should. Should I? No? 16 Yes? I don't know. It's a lot. Speaker, should 17 I? I don't know. Will they be angry? Yeah, 18 they will. It's a lot of introducing. Let's 19 keep going with this speech. 20 But you know, when you have a when 21 you're in this profession, I have a friend who 22 wanted to come in. I said, what's your you like 23 speaking? Well, I do. But I have a great fear 24 of speaking. I said, don't be a politician. If 25 you have a fear of speaking, don't be a</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p>

<p>1 politician. But one thing you have to know is 2 that no matter how good your people are that 3 operate this machinery, it's going to break and 4 you're going to be out there all by yourself a 5 lot. And you got to be able to do so.</p> <p>6 Three weeks ago, she was saying there 7 was only 32 days left. And she's reading it like 8 this. Thirty-two days and it stopped. And she 9 went is 32 days. Thirty-two. Thirty-two. And I 10 was watching. He said, this isn't pretty. 11 Thirty-two. She was gone. And then, damn it, it 12 kicked back on. She was gone.</p> <p>13 We've had it. It happens a lot. And 14 don't forget, you had all those people back 15 there. Now, they don't talk about her. But if 16 that ever happened, it happens all the time.</p> <p>17 I was campaigning in Ohio for a very, 18 very Bernie Marino. He's doing a good job. I 19 think he's maybe going to win in Ohio. The 20 problem, he's got his opponent, Brown, Sherrod 21 Brown, he's taking ads in like he's my best 22 friend. He never votes for me. He's not my best 23 friend.</p> <p>24 Ohio has been very friendly to Trump. 25 We win it all the time by a landslide. But the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 millions and millions of people. She would get 2 us into World War III. We're very close to World 3 War III. If you don't have a smart president, 4 you don't have a president that gets it. If you 5 don't have a president that is respected by the 6 other side. And they did respect us four years 7 ago. They really respected us.</p> <p>8 Iran was broke. They had no money. 9 Russia wouldn't have played with us at all. 10 Russia would have never gone into Ukraine. 11 Israel, October 7th, would never, ever have 12 happened, would have never happened. All those 13 all those people would be alive right now. Those 14 people that were killed on that horrible day.</p> <p>15 But if you don't have a president that 16 gets it, you know, you know what else you 17 wouldn't have had. You wouldn't have had that. 18 The most embarrassing day in the history of our 19 country, in my opinion, Afghanistan, the way they 20 not that they got out, we were getting out, but 21 we were going to get out with dignity and 22 strength.</p> <p>23 We got out an embarrassment, the likes 24 of which this country has never suffered. And 25 because of that, Putin looked at us and they</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p>
<p>1 opponent is taking ads. I got four of them. I 2 think we have four of them, right? They're 3 taking ads. All of a sudden, they love Trump. 4 We agree with Trump on tariffs. We agree with 5 Trump on the border. We love Trump. And they're 6 Democrats. Their friends are calling up. Did 7 they switch to the Republican Party?</p> <p>8 But it happened with Bernie Marino. I 9 was in Ohio to try and get him over the 10 initial primary hump. And it was 45 mile an hour 11 winds. And these suckers were blowing like -- 12 you ever try reading a teleprompter where it's 13 moving about two feet in each -- but I didn't 14 have to worry about that, because even worse, 15 they ended up blowing off the stage a lot of it.</p> <p>16 So, I'm now in the first sentence. And 17 I got 28,000 people and millions of people 18 watching on television. I got no teleprompter. 19 And did I do a good job, Mr. Speaker? Anyone? 20 Anyone? Thank you, Matt. Anyone? And so, 21 you're up there all alone. We don't go 32, 32, 22 32. Oh, my God.</p> <p>23 Kamala Harris is a train wreck who has 24 destroyed everything in her path to make her 25 president would be a gamble with the lives of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p>	<p>1 probably figured we were a paper tiger. And he 2 went into Ukraine and the rest is history. It 3 would have never happened with us.</p> <p>4 And you wouldn't have had any 5 inflation. You know, we had the best economy. 6 We had no inflation, and inflation has destroyed 7 a lot of seniors on fixed income. And a lot of 8 people in this room have been virtually destroyed 9 by inflation. You wouldn't have had inflation. 10 They screwed up our energy and it went up so 11 much. And then they started spending far too 12 much money on things like the Green New Deal 13 scam, which is just a scam, just a complete scam. 14 They actually admitted that if you think about 15 it.</p> <p>16 But she would get us into World War III 17 because she's incompetent, can't do the job, 18 unfit for it. And then all of your sons and 19 daughters will end up getting a little notice. 20 They'll say, Mom, Dad, what is this little green 21 piece of paper? Oh, aye, aye. Darling, that's a 22 draft notice. They're drafting you to go and 23 fight in some country that I've never heard this. 24 I've never heard of this country before. Oh, no. 25 I don't want my baby to fight. I don't want my</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p>

<p>1 baby to be killed.</p> <p>2 What they did in Afghanistan with those</p> <p>3 13 great soldiers -- I've gotten to know the</p> <p>4 parents so well and leaving all of that equipment</p> <p>5 behind and leaving Americans behind. And many,</p> <p>6 many people with no legs and no arms, all because</p> <p>7 of incompetent people.</p> <p>8 But we don't want your sons and</p> <p>9 daughters to get a little draft notice, and you</p> <p>10 have to explain to them what it means. We're</p> <p>11 tired of fighting. I'm the only president in the</p> <p>12 last 84 years that didn't start a war. Remember</p> <p>13 Crooked Hillary? Remember Crooked Hillary</p> <p>14 Clinton? Crooked Hillary, oh, she was a beauty.</p> <p>15 During one of our many debates, she</p> <p>16 said, look at him, listen to him. He's going to</p> <p>17 start a war. Listen to his rhetoric. He's going</p> <p>18 to start a war. I said, no, no, no. My rhetoric</p> <p>19 is going to keep us out of wars. And that's what</p> <p>20 happened. 82 years -- other than I finished off</p> <p>21 ISIS. But that was already started.</p> <p>22 We had stupid generals like Milley and</p> <p>23 Mattis, weak, stupid people. But fear not. We</p> <p>24 have great generals. It's not the ones that you</p> <p>25 see on television all the time. And we wiped</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 about the same one tenth of one percent of dying.</p> <p>2 If you become president of the United States, you</p> <p>3 got a hell of a shot at dying.</p> <p>4 I never knew that when I ran. I never</p> <p>5 thought about it. But but here we are. Here we</p> <p>6 are. And I'm OK with it. And I would rather be</p> <p>7 here than any place in the world. It's called a</p> <p>8 very dangerous profession. But if we win, our</p> <p>9 enemies won't be laughing anymore. They're not</p> <p>10 going to be laughing.</p> <p>11 And you know what? The truth is, I got</p> <p>12 along with all of them. I got along with Putin.</p> <p>13 Ukraine was the apple of his eye. But I said,</p> <p>14 Vladimir, don't go in. Remember, I ended the</p> <p>15 pipeline in Europe. I ended the pipeline in</p> <p>16 Europe. And then when Biden came in, he approved</p> <p>17 it. But he ended the Keystone Pipeline, the one</p> <p>18 in America. So, he got it. He got it a little</p> <p>19 mixed up, didn't he? Nord Stream 2.</p> <p>20 I said, we're ending Nord Stream 2.</p> <p>21 Everybody said, what is Nord Stream 2? I said,</p> <p>22 that's the massive Russian pipeline where they're</p> <p>23 going to make a fortune, where they're going to</p> <p>24 Germany and all countries in Europe. So, I said,</p> <p>25 you mean we're fighting to help them with NATO</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p>
<p>1 them out very quickly. It was going to take five</p> <p>2 years.</p> <p>3 Mattis said it would take five years.</p> <p>4 And I'm not sure we could do it. It took us like</p> <p>5 four weeks. We have great generals. We have the</p> <p>6 greatest military in the world. Just a lot of</p> <p>7 people don't know that. And everybody knows it.</p> <p>8 But, you know, I saw the other day a</p> <p>9 report that they issued that if we end up in a</p> <p>10 war with China, we cannot win. We're not strong</p> <p>11 enough. So, I said to myself, assuming that's</p> <p>12 true, how stupid are you to put out a report like</p> <p>13 that? How stupid? Why would you put out a</p> <p>14 report that they'll say, oh, Trump is not</p> <p>15 truthful? No, I'm smart. You don't put out</p> <p>16 reports like that. And it's not true. We would</p> <p>17 kick their ass. It's not true. Terrible.</p> <p>18 Our enemies are laughing at her. They</p> <p>19 want her to win so badly. They don't want Trump.</p> <p>20 They don't want Trump. I've made this position a</p> <p>21 very dangerous one because of that. That's why</p> <p>22 it's a very dangerous. You know, if you drive a</p> <p>23 race car, you have one tenth of one percent</p> <p>24 chance of dying. If you ride the bulls, I think</p> <p>25 the bulls are pretty nasty, right? You have</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p>	<p>1 and spending all of that money and they're paying</p> <p>2 the person and the group that we're fighting</p> <p>3 billions of dollars a month? What the hell are</p> <p>4 we doing? I ended it. It was dead. And Biden</p> <p>5 came along, and he approved it. Weak.</p> <p>6 Look, 30 years ago, he was not</p> <p>7 considered smart either. So, now he's really</p> <p>8 that smart. If we win, America will be</p> <p>9 respected. And even if it's necessary to hear it</p> <p>10 again, it's not the worst word.</p> <p>11 On issue after issue, Kamala broke it,</p> <p>12 but I will fix it. We're going to fix it. But</p> <p>13 we're just not running against Kamala. I think a</p> <p>14 lot of our politicians here tonight know this.</p> <p>15 She means nothing. She's purely a vessel.</p> <p>16 That's all she is.</p> <p>17 When you see her up there talking about</p> <p>18 the grass on my front lawn, I grew up in a</p> <p>19 middle-class neighborhood and I had grass on my</p> <p>20 front lawn. Yeah, but we're asking, what would</p> <p>21 you do to fix the country? And why didn't you do</p> <p>22 it yet? Almost four years. Why didn't you do</p> <p>23 this stuff?</p> <p>24 Now she's, you know, she's becoming</p> <p>25 more MAGA than those politicians I just told you</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>

<p>1 about from the different states. She can't put 2 two sentences together. She's just like she's 3 really just like, in many ways, Crooked Joe 4 Biden. Crooked Joe Biden. And she never said to 5 us, she never told us that Joe was not 6 functioning properly. She should have. You 7 know, we're talking about the life of the most 8 important country in the world. We need very 9 smart people.</p> <p>10 We're running against something far 11 bigger than Joe or Kamala and far more powerful 12 than them, which is a massive, vicious, crooked, 13 radical left machine that runs today's Democrat 14 Party. They're just vessels. In fact, they're 15 perfect vessels because they'll never give them a 16 hard time. They'll do whatever they want. I 17 know many of them. It's just this amorphous 18 group of people. But they're smart and they're 19 vicious. And we have to defeat them.</p> <p>20 And when I say the enemy from within, 21 the other side goes crazy, becomes a sound hole. 22 How can he say now they've done very bad things 23 to this country? They are indeed the enemy from 24 within. But this is who we're fighting. These 25 are the people who are doing such harm to our</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 KAMALA HARRIS: There is not a thing 2 that comes to mind."</p> <p>3 MAN 15: I stood there on the tarmac 4 watching you check your watch.</p> <p>5 WOMAN 10: The chaotic and deadly U.S. 6 evacuation from Afghanistan stunned Americans and 7 the world and cost the lives of 13 U.S. soldiers.</p> <p>8 WOMAN 11: Would you have done 9 something differently?</p> <p>10 KAMALA HARRIS: There is not a thing 11 that comes to mind."</p> <p>12 MAN 16: More than 13,000 illegal 13 immigrants convicted of murder have been caught 14 at the border and then released into the United 15 States.</p> <p>16 MAN 17: An Afghan national is in 17 custody today after being accused of plotting an 18 election day terrorist attack. The suspect 19 entered the U.S. on a special immigrant visa.</p> <p>20 WOMAN 12: Gut-wrenching new details in 21 the murder of Georgia nursing student Laken 22 Riley.</p> <p>23 WOMAN 13: The illegal immigrant 24 suspect who cops say committed the heinous murder 25 is a Venezuelan national who crossed the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p>
<p>1 country with their open border policies, record 2 setting inflation, Green New Deal scam and 3 everything else that they're doing.</p> <p>4 But we're not going to let it happen 5 any longer. We're going to have the biggest 6 victory in the history of our country on November 7 5th. It's going to be the biggest. We're going 8 to make America great again, everybody.</p> <p>9 On top of it all, Kamala say she would 10 not do one thing differently from Joe Biden, 11 which is totally disqualifying. And you have to 12 remember this. All of the mistakes you made. 13 And you know what? Maybe is the worst. But 14 they're also bad.</p> <p>15 Think of this. 325,000 children are 16 missing dead sex slaves or slaves. They came 17 through the open border, and they're gone. Their 18 parents will most likely never see them again. 19 Almost any of them. Think of the number 325,000 20 children are missing or dead.</p> <p>21 Take a look at this, please. 22 [VIDEO CLIP PLAYS] 23 WOMAN 9: Would you have done something 24 differently than President Biden during the past 25 four years?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p>	<p>1 unsecured southern border back in 2022.</p> <p>2 WOMAN 14: Two men investigators say 3 are in the country illegally from Venezuela are 4 charged with capital murder and the death of 5 Jocelyn Nungaray.</p> <p>6 WOMAN 15: A fifth illegal immigrant 7 accused of attacking two New York City police 8 officers over the weekend shows no remorse or 9 regret.</p> <p>10 WOMAN 11: Would you have done 11 something differently?</p> <p>12 KAMALA HARRIS: There is not a thing 13 that comes to mind.</p> <p>14 MAN 18: Only 18 percent say the 15 economy is in excellent or good condition.</p> <p>16 MAN 19: U.S. inflation has hit a new 17 40-year high, increasing by 9.1 percent over the 18 financial year.</p> <p>19 WOMAN 16: Authorities say train day 20 Aragua, which has been linked with more than 100 21 criminal investigations here in the U.S., have 22 now been found operating a criminal enterprise in 23 apartment complexes.</p> <p>24 WOMAN 17: Were you the last person in 25 the room?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 29</p>

<p>1 KAMALA HARRIS: Yes. 2 [VIDEO CLIP CONCLUDES] 3 DONALD TRUMP: So, if you want to end 4 this disaster, you got to get out and vote. Just 5 go out and vote. You got to get out. We have to 6 put it away. We're close. We're so close. You 7 know, usually the Republicans are losing in the 8 first week of the early voting, and we did 9 something that has not been done. I don't think 10 Speaker has been done yet, but it's been done for 11 us. We're leading every one of the swing states, 12 all seven of them. 13 We usually get them from behind. 14 Because Republicans like to vote on a thing 15 called election day. You know, in the old days, 16 we had election days. Today we have election 17 periods. They go on forever. And last time they 18 went beyond and start early, start late, do 19 whatever the hell you want. 20 You know, we got more votes in 2020 21 than any sitting president in history by 22 millions. And we did great. Obviously, in 2016, 23 we won, but we did much better in 2020. But 24 everything, nothing compares to what's happening. 25 I mean, you have tens of thousands of people</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 But really, that's the same. I do it in every 2 event. I say, who's voted? 3 The last three events. Last night, I 4 was at Penn State, a great place I met. I 5 actually met, this is amazing, the national 6 championship wrestling team. They won. Penn 7 State won the national championship. I listened 8 to this 11 out of the last 13 years. Even Jim 9 Jordan would be impressed by that. You know, Jim 10 Jordan is a great guy. He's a great wrestler, 11 all-American wrestler, Jim. You can see it by 12 the way he acts. Not afraid of anything, right? 13 And I looked at those guys, and they're 14 rough as hell. I said, you may be the only 15 people that can take Trendy Uruguay in a fight. 16 And it won't even be that easy for them. They're 17 tough people. But it was great to meet that 18 team. And they're great champions. Amazing, 19 really great champions. And we were packed at 20 Penn State. We were packed. No matter where we 21 go, we're packed. No matter where we go because 22 there's something happening. And the something 23 happening is they want to take back their 24 country. People want to take back their country. 25 You love the country. I love the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p>
<p>1 standing outside watching us on a television, and 2 we love you out there. We love you. They're 3 watching. 4 But both of those great races, both of 5 them don't compare to what's happening now. In 6 Florida, we took a massive lead. And all of 7 these places, I mean, there's something happening 8 that's really good. There's something happening 9 that's really good. But let's close it out. 10 Pretend you're one point down. Would everybody 11 pretend? 12 Let me just do a poll. Who has already 13 voted? Who is going to vote? That's what I 14 like. That would be better than the other way. 15 That would be better than the other way if you've 16 already voted. So, I'd say 16, 17, maybe 20 17 percent. And we're leading. And most of you 18 haven't voted, but you promise you're going to 19 vote? Everybody, promise? There's a lot of 20 people in here. 21 Well, the beauty is that, you know, a 22 Republican likes to vote late. And they like to 23 vote and make sure their vote is in the box, 24 right? They want to vote. They just feel better 25 about it. And so, we had a lot of people voting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p>	<p>1 country. We want to take it back. I could be 2 right now on the most beautiful beach in the 3 world. I could be at Turnberry in Scotland. I 4 could be anywhere. I got that greatest. I don't 5 have to be here, but I would much rather be at 6 Madison Square Garden with you. 7 So, we're thrilled to be joined today 8 by an incredible group of patriots who are going 9 to help us save our country, including our next 10 Vice President, J. D. Vance. And a man who was 11 so incredible last week, I watched that rocket 12 ship come down. I've never seen it. 13 I told this story last night. I was on 14 the phone with a very, very important person. 15 And I'm talking to him and I'm watching the 16 television while I'm talking to this guy. He's 17 boring as hell. And I said, wait a minute. 18 Wait, wait, wait a minute. I'm looking at the 19 screen and I see this rocket pouring the fire, 20 the flames. It's all over the place. It was 21 white a week ago and now it's pitch black from 22 the burning coming down at 10,000 miles an hour. 23 It's coming down and I love it. He's 24 that great. You know what he was doing for the 25 last week? Campaigning in Pennsylvania. He's a</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p>

<p>1 sweetheart, too. So, I'm talking to this guy, 2 very important guy, big, big guy. And I have the 3 television screen on and there's rockets coming 4 down. I said, you know, it was pure, beautiful 5 white when it left, but it's burned from the fire 6 and the flame. And it is. 7 And now I see it coming down like this. 8 And it's like 20 stories tall or something. It's 9 massive. And it's coming down. I say to the 10 guy, give me a favor. Will you hold on a minute? 11 Just hold on. I'm going to talk to you. This is 12 like one of the most important people. I'm 13 watching. Just hold on. I put the phone down. 14 By the way, I never picked it up again. 15 You know what these people are going to say? Oh, 16 you don't think so? They're the worst. They are 17 the worst. So, I put it down and I'm watching 18 this rocket. And I see the engines. I said, oh, 19 it's going to crash. No, because it was looking 20 great next to a gantry. I guess they call it the 21 gantry, whatever the hell they call it. The 22 launching pad. 23 And it's coming down at a bad angle. 24 And I wasn't happy. And I was a little worried. 25 You might have been worried, too. I said, oh,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 Can the United States do that? No. Can China do 2 that? No. Can anybody do that other than you? 3 Nobody else can do it. Nobody else can do it. 4 Pretty good. And he said, and they won't be able 5 to for 10 years, you said, right? They won't be 6 able to for 10 years. No, he's amazing. And 7 he's a great guy too. He really is. Got to 8 remember him. This is a piece of work. 9 You know, we had a black hat, right? I 10 was with a black hat at Butler. He was there. 11 It was beautiful. We had 101,000 people 12 celebrating a great firefighter, a great guy, 13 Corey. And Elon got up. And I didn't even know 14 we made a black hat. I've never seen anybody 15 wear it. I see the red hats all over the place, 16 the white hats. I see all different, but I never 17 saw black. 18 But he liked the black. You know, he 19 said it was different. It's a black hat with 20 black letters, OK? It's called understated. I 21 said, do you like that hat? He said, I love that 22 hat. I call it Dark MAGA. But you know that 23 after that evening, that became our number one 24 best-selling hat. All I have to do is put 25 something on it, and now you're great. And thank</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 36</p>
<p>1 no, it's not going to be good. And I saw the 2 flame on the bottom left. And it was ripping. 3 The flame was pouring out of that sucker. And it 4 straightened it out like this. And it came down. 5 And it landed. And then it's two of these big, 6 beautiful arms grabbed it. And they held it 7 tight. 8 And I said, I wasn't sure if it was a 9 movie. I thought it might be one of these crazy 10 movies. And I said, I got to call Elon. And I 11 called him. I said, Elon, was that you? This is 12 like about four minutes after. Was that you? 13 Yeah, that was me. 14 I say, Elon, you're a genius. You are 15 a genius. You are a genius. He is special. He 16 is special. And you know what he wants more than 17 anything else? For our country to be really well 18 run, solidly run. To be run democratically. All 19 the things that everybody in this room wants. 20 And I mean, honestly, he left that pad. And he 21 went to Pennsylvania to campaign. Can you 22 believe it? 23 And I asked him a couple of questions. 24 I said, Elon, let me ask you a question. Can 25 Russia do that? No. Can China do that? No.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 35</p>	<p>1 you very much. Thank you very much. It's great. 2 Thank you. 3 And we also have somebody that is 4 great. And look, we're not going to let him go 5 too crazy, Elon, with the oil and gas stuff. 6 Because Robert F. Kennedy cares more about human 7 beings and health and the environment than 8 anybody. And he's going to be absolute. Having 9 him is such a great honor. I've been friends of 10 his for a long time. And I'm going to let him go 11 wild on health. I'm going to let him go wild on 12 the food. I'm going to let him go wild on 13 medicine. The only thing I don't think I'm going 14 to let him even get near is the liquid gold that 15 we have under our feet. I don't know, Elon. He 16 might not like liquid gold. It's oil and gas. 17 Sometimes referred to as oil and gas. 18 J.D., I think we're going to have to 19 keep him away from the oil and gas. What do you 20 think, Howard? Yes? 21 But where is Robert? He's around. He 22 gave a beautiful speech. And it's an honor. And 23 we're also pleased to be joined by my beautiful 24 wife. She's got the number one bestselling book 25 in the whole universe. New York Times. Number</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p>


<p>1 one bestselling. Go out and buy one of her 2 books. It's a great book.</p> <p>3 You know what? I was nervous when I 4 read it. I said, I wonder if she said some bad 5 stuff about me. I was very nervous. But she's 6 great. Congratulations, honey. That's a big 7 deal. Number one in the New York Times list. 8 Now, if she's number one and her name is Trump on 9 the New York Times list, that book definitely was 10 number one. I guarantee you that. Thank you, 11 honey. Great.</p> <p>12 And we have a fabulous, brilliant 13 woman. Top, top student. Top student at Yale 14 Law School. They were both top students. They 15 can have very smart kids. If you believe in 16 that, I believe in it strongly. I would like to 17 have their children because they are going to be 18 smart. Yale Law School, top of the class, both 19 of them. Usha Vance, thank you, Usha, for being 20 here. Thank you. Thank you very much. With 21 their two beautiful children.</p> <p>22 And my children here, Don and Eric and 23 Tiffany. And along with Lara, Kimberly, and 24 Michael. We have great people. We have Barron 25 home. He's watching. That Barron is watching.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 place, Alabama. I love Alabama. I'm up in 2 Alabama by 49 points. 49 points. We're up by a 3 lot, in a lot of different places. But it's a 4 great place. And thank you, Tommy.</p> <p>5 And all of our other great congressmen. 6 We have so many. If I ever named them, we're 7 going to be up here a long time. So, they're 8 going to be angry. They won't speak to me for 9 probably a month or so. It'll calm down. It'll 10 calm down. But we have great, great people. And 11 they're really doing a job. And we're going to 12 turn this country around.</p> <p>13 You know, with me, we've got to get the 14 congressmen elected. And we've got to get the 15 senators elected. Because we can take the Senate 16 pretty easily. And I think with our little 17 secret, we're going to do really well with the 18 House, right? Our little secret is having a big 19 impact. He and I have a secret. We'll tell you 20 what it is when the race is over.</p> <p>21 I also want to thank Jim Dolan and 22 everyone at Madison Square Garden for an 23 unbelievable. This is unbelievable. I've 24 watched the Knicks and Rangers here. And what a 25 location. You know, they tried to talk Jim out</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p>
<p>1 He's the king of the internet. He's the king of 2 the Internet. Oh. Who was that? That's very 3 nice.</p> <p>4 My sister Elizabeth is here. She's 5 great. I don't know where she is, but she's 6 great. And we love her. And Speaker Mike 7 Johnson is here.</p> <p>8 And he's doing a great job. It's not 9 easy when you have a majority of three. But he's 10 done a great job. And he's going to continue to 11 do a great job. And we like him. He's a 12 terrific person.</p> <p>13 I watched him just totally decapitate a 14 fake reporter on NBC. Meet the press. Meet the 15 fake press. What he did to her was, I think, 16 probably that should never be the same. Look at 17 him. Such a nice-looking guy. Just that little 18 beautiful face with the glasses. Got the little 19 glasses. Everyone says, oh, he's so nice. He's 20 such a nice person. He's not a nice person. 21 He's not nice at all. Right, Matt? But great 22 job. We think he's great. And he's going to be 23 around for a long time, I predict.</p> <p>24 We have a senator here who I love. 25 Senator Tommy Tuberville. And he's from a great</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p>	<p>1 of this location. We're going to move you to the 2 river. We're going to move you all over the 3 place. He's tough. He said, I don't know. They 4 offered him all sorts of money. He said, we're 5 going to move it to the river. Well, we're right 6 on top of every train hub. It's like the world 7 or something right here. And he didn't like it 8 that much, but he was over a lot. Man, did he 9 make a good decision. That would have been 10 peanuts compared to the value. But there's no 11 place like Madison Square Garden. Thank you very 12 much to Jim and all of your people.</p> <p>13 But here are the facts. Kamala Harris 14 is a radical left Marxist, rated even worse than 15 crazy Bernie Sanders or Pocahontas. She 16 destroyed our economy. She was an original 17 creator of Defund the Police. Can you believe 18 it? She was one of the originals for Defund the 19 Police. And anybody who wants to defund our 20 great police for even one week is not worthy of 21 being president of the United States. Because 22 that's where her thinking is.</p> <p>23 Kamala vowed to abolish ICE. You know, 24 those tough people you've been looking up at the 25 screen. They're the ones that get them out of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p>

<p>1 our country. I know a lot of people right in 2 these rows. They're very tough. They don't want 3 any part of it. They got to go in there, fist to 4 blazing to move them.</p> <p>5 You know, we had a case in Long Island 6 where MS-13, one of the other really bad gangs, 7 killed two young girls, 16 years old, walking to 8 school. They didn't shoot them. They knifed 9 them and they cut them into little pieces because 10 it was so painful. Perfect, perfect, young, 11 beautiful girls were cut up into little pieces by 12 knives. MS-13, they're animals. And you know 13 who took care of it for us? ICE. ICE. They had 14 no problem.</p> <p>15 Kamala wants to defund ICE. We're not 16 defunding ICE, right? We're not defunding ICE. 17 We're not even going to think about it. She's 18 never going to get the chance. There's no way 19 she becomes president. There's no way.</p> <p>20 Radical left lunatic who destroyed. 21 She destroyed San Francisco. She destroyed, 22 along with Gavin Newsom, the governor, who's the 23 worst, one of the worst governors in the country. 24 They destroyed California. And she's not going 25 to get a chance to destroy our country any</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 She destroyed the place.</p> <p>2 But you know, she lied about that. But 3 she also lied about something very important. 4 For years and years, she said she had a job at 5 McDonald's. And the reason I went there last 6 week, I got a call from Sundar, very smart guy at 7 Google. He said, this is the most amazing thing. 8 We've had just about more hits on this crazy 9 McDonald's story.</p> <p>10 And I went there just to prove a little 11 point. See, you never know how something's going 12 to work out, Mr. VP, do you? But he called and 13 he said, we've had more hits on McDonald's than I 14 think he's said anything we've ever had. But 15 let's say it's close. And did anybody watch Joe 16 Rogan recently?</p> <p>17 So, she lied about McDonald's. She 18 lied about everything. She's got ads on saying 19 Donald Trump is this. He's going to do this. 20 It's the exact opposite of what my policies are. 21 She's got me doing this. He doesn't want to 22 frack. No, no, I'm all for fracking.</p> <p>23 One thing I have been, even the enemy, 24 because they are the enemy, what they've said, 25 even that enemy, too, when they're really the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p>
<p>1 further. We're going to get it back fast.</p> <p>2 She wants to ban fracking. And as 3 California Attorney General, she redefined child 4 sex trafficking, assault with a deadly weapon, 5 and rape of an unconscious person as a totally 6 nonviolent crime. She pledged to confiscate your 7 guns. Is there anybody in the room that would 8 like to give up their gun to Kamala? I had a 9 feeling you might say that. And endorsed a total 10 ban on handgun ownership.</p> <p>11 I don't think that's good. When a 12 criminal crawls into your house at night, it 13 would be nice to be able to at least have a 14 chance, wouldn't it? Wouldn't it be nice? She 15 even called for free sex change operations on 16 illegal aliens in detention at taxpayer expense. 17 Think of it. At taxpayer, she said, they're 18 caught. They're illegally detained. But if they 19 want a sex change operation, she's all in favor. 20 She's all in favor.</p> <p>21 Now she gave this stuff up about a year 22 ago, a little more because it didn't work. It 23 wasn't working too well with the electorate. But 24 she'll be back to it because that's where it is. 25 She's a radical left person from San Francisco.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p>	<p>1 enemy, they're the enemy of the people, the 2 press. They said one thing about me that I 3 consider a great compliment. They said, this guy 4 is the most consistent person we've ever seen. 5 Because I've been against cars and car factories 6 being taken out of Detroit and being taken out of 7 our manufacturing of automobiles, being taken out 8 of our system, out of our country for years.</p> <p>9 I've been against all of the things 10 that are happening and have happened. We stopped 11 it, and now it's happening again. When you hear 12 50,000 manufacturing jobs lost in just a short 13 period of time. But I've been the most 14 consistent because we're going to bring our 15 manufacturing back to the United States. It's 16 all coming back, so get ready. Get ready. 17 You're going to have your choice of great jobs.</p> <p>18 And on top of all this, Kamala tried to 19 turn our military woke into an army. So, 20 tonight, whether you are a Republican, Democrat, 21 or Independent, Conservative, or Liberal, I'm 22 inviting you to join the greatest political 23 movement in the history of our country. It's 24 really the... You know, it's the greatest 25 movement in the history of our country.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p>

<p>1 I tell them the story years ago. 2 There's a guy, great guy, older guy now, very 3 old. But he was great. Conservative guy, Pat 4 Buchanan, right? Yeah. He came in second in the 5 New Hampshire primary. And for 45 years, he made 6 an unbelievable career of it. He was a hot item. 7 He was on every show. He came in second in one 8 primary. 9 We came in first in 50 primaries. We 10 then had a great election that we won. We then 11 had another great election that we did a hell of 12 a lot better in. Bad things happened. We're not 13 going to let that happen. That's a cheat. 14 But we then had an election, but now we 15 have the election of all. This will be, in my 16 opinion, I have to say if, because, you know, 17 there's always risks, I guess. But if we pull 18 this off, this will be the biggest political 19 event in the history of our country. Right? And 20 we're building the biggest, broadest, most 21 diverse coalition in American history, including 22 union workers and Border Patrol agents. 23 By the way, the Border Patrol gave me 24 last week their complete and total endorsement. 25 They said he's the greatest president in the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 think they have one cop. They're looking for 2 just one cop. Is there one? Well, it's not 3 going to be a New York's finest. By the way, how 4 good are the police outside? New York's finest. 5 Now she's trying to say, well, you 6 know, I was really not the border. Whether she 7 was the Border czar or not, she was put in charge 8 of the border because she did the worst job on 9 the border than anybody has done in the history 10 of the world. There's never been a border like 11 this in the world. And a third world country 12 would fight people with sticks and stones to stop 13 them from pouring into that country. And we let 14 them just come right in. What a shame. What a 15 shame. 16 Police and firefighters also. We have 17 every endorsement from virtually every sheriff's 18 department, every police department. I don't 19 think they have one cop. They're looking for 20 just one cop. Is there one? Well, it's not 21 going to be a New York's finest. By the way, how 22 good are the police outside? New York's finest. 23 Now she's trying to say, well, you 24 know, I was really not the border. Whether she 25 was the Border czar or not, she was put in charge</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p>
<p>1 history of the country, but we don't have to go 2 that far. And they said there's never been 3 anybody like him on the border. They said to 4 him, the fake news said, has she ever called you? 5 Has she ever called you? No. They didn't like 6 that answer, by the way. Then they asked her, 7 have you ever called? No, she never called. 8 Almost four years, she never called, not once, 9 the Border Patrol. And she was the Border czar. 10 She was in charge of the border. Think of it. 11 Four years, she never called. 12 Now she's trying to say, well, you 13 know, I was really not the border. Whether she 14 was the Border czar or not, she was put in charge 15 of the border because she did the worst job on 16 the border than anybody has done in the history 17 of the world. There's never been a border like 18 this in the world. And a third world country 19 would fight people with sticks and stones to stop 20 them from pouring into that country. And we let 21 them just come right in. What a shame. What a 22 shame. 23 Police and firefighters also. We have 24 every endorsement from virtually every sheriff's 25 department, every police department. I don't</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p>	<p>1 of the border because she did the worst job on 2 the border than anybody has done in the history 3 of the world. There's never been a border like 4 this in the world. And a third world country 5 would fight people with sticks and stones to stop 6 them from pouring into that country. And we let 7 them just come right in. What a shame. What a 8 shame. 9 Police and firefighters also. We have 10 every endorsement from virtually every sheriff's 11 department, every police department. I don't 12 think they have one cop. They're looking for 13 just one cop. Is there one? Well, it's not 14 going to be a New York's finest. By the way, how 15 good are the police outside? New York's finest. 16 Now she's trying to say, well, you 17 know, I was really not the border. Whether she 18 was the Border czar or not, she was put in charge 19 of the border because she did the worst job on 20 the border than anybody has done in the history 21 of the world. There's never been a border like 22 this in the world. And a third world country 23 would fight people with sticks and stones to stop 24 them from pouring into that country. And we let 25 them just come right in. What a shame. What a</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p>

<p>1 shame.</p> <p>2 Police and firefighters also. We have</p> <p>3 every endorsement from virtually every sheriff's</p> <p>4 department, every police department. I don't</p> <p>5 think they have one cop. They're looking for</p> <p>6 just one cop. Is there one? Well, it's not</p> <p>7 going to be a New York's finest. By the way, how</p> <p>8 good are the police outside? New York's finest.</p> <p>9 We're seeing historic levels of support</p> <p>10 among our black population, Hispanic population,</p> <p>11 and our Asian population. Muslims, by the way.</p> <p>12 Did anybody see yesterday? Did anybody see what</p> <p>13 took place? I was with the Muslims yesterday in</p> <p>14 Michigan. And when the polls first came out,</p> <p>15 they had a hundred percent. I had zero.</p> <p>16 And yesterday I watched this anchor on</p> <p>17 CNN almost choke. She said, something's</p> <p>18 happening in Michigan. Big population, couple of</p> <p>19 hundred thousand, a lot of votes. Something's</p> <p>20 happening. The poll just came out. Trump is at</p> <p>21 59. Kamala is at eight with the Muslim</p> <p>22 population. They never saw anything like that.</p> <p>23 And these are people, by the way, they're great.</p> <p>24 They just want peace. They want to have peace</p> <p>25 and it's great.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 We will crush violent crime and give</p> <p>2 our police the support, protection, resources,</p> <p>3 and respect that they so dearly deserve.</p> <p>4 We will strengthen and modernize our</p> <p>5 military. I rebuilt our military in total. We</p> <p>6 built all of our military, built 571 miles of</p> <p>7 wall too. I took it out of the military because</p> <p>8 I couldn't get it from the people in Congress</p> <p>9 that should have given it to us. So, I</p> <p>10 considered it an invasion. I said to a couple of</p> <p>11 generals, I said, congratulations, this is an</p> <p>12 invasion of our country. So, I took it out of</p> <p>13 the military, gave it to the Americans and won</p> <p>14 them all.</p> <p>15 We will build a massive defense shield</p> <p>16 all made in the USA. We're going to build a</p> <p>17 beautiful dome over our country. And a lot of</p> <p>18 it's going to be made right here in New York.</p> <p>19 We will rebuild our cities, including</p> <p>20 our capital in Washington, D.C., which has become</p> <p>21 a very dangerous and badly managed place. We're</p> <p>22 going to make them safe, clean, and beautiful</p> <p>23 again. We're going to make it a place to honor</p> <p>24 our history and to always respect our great</p> <p>25 American flag.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p>
<p>1 So, Jews and Muslims and Catholics and</p> <p>2 evangelicals and Mormons are all joining our</p> <p>3 cause in large numbers, larger than anyone has</p> <p>4 ever seen in this country before. Larger than</p> <p>5 they've ever seen in any country. And the</p> <p>6 Republican Party has really become the party of</p> <p>7 inclusion. And that's something very nice about</p> <p>8 that. And we're a big, powerful party and</p> <p>9 they're losing it. They're really losing it.</p> <p>10 Together we will lift America to glory</p> <p>11 beyond your wildest dreams. So, in conclusion,</p> <p>12 with your vote this November, we are going to</p> <p>13 fire Kamala, and we are going to save America.</p> <p>14 We will cut your taxes, end inflation,</p> <p>15 slash your prices, raise your wages, and bring</p> <p>16 thousands and thousands of factories back to</p> <p>17 America. We're even going to get Elon to bring</p> <p>18 that stuff back.</p> <p>19 We will build America. We will buy</p> <p>20 America, and we will hire America.</p> <p>21 I will end the war in Ukraine, which</p> <p>22 would have never happened if I were president.</p> <p>23 I will stop the chaos in the Middle</p> <p>24 East, and I will prevent World War III from</p> <p>25 happening.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p>	<p>1 And as long as the Speaker of the House</p> <p>2 of Representatives is here, I would like to put</p> <p>3 forward a bill because I watched two months ago</p> <p>4 as some very bad people, radical left people, by</p> <p>5 the way, nothing happened to them in Washington,</p> <p>6 D.C., burned our American flags. And I would</p> <p>7 like to suggest that we put in a bill. If you</p> <p>8 burn the American flag one year in jail, we will</p> <p>9 get critical race theory and transgender insanity</p> <p>10 the hell out of our school. And we will keep men</p> <p>11 out of women's sports. And we will keep men out</p> <p>12 of women's sports. And we will keep men out of</p> <p>13 women's sports. And we will keep men out of</p> <p>14 women's sports.</p> <p>15 I will defend religious liberty. I</p> <p>16 will restore free speech. And I will defend the</p> <p>17 right to keep and bear arms. Our Second</p> <p>18 Amendment is under siege. After years of</p> <p>19 building up foreign nations, defending foreign</p> <p>20 borders, and protecting foreign lands, we are</p> <p>21 finally going to build up our country, defend our</p> <p>22 borders, and protect our citizens. America</p> <p>23 first.</p> <p>24 And it's going to happen at levels</p> <p>25 never seen before. And I'll tell our friends,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 53</p>

<p>1 our allies, who sometimes treat us very badly, 2 that it's about time we take care of ourselves. 3 And we will stop the illegal immigration that's 4 taking place at levels never seen before. We 5 will stop it cold and once and for all, we will 6 not be occupied. We will not be overrun. We 7 will not be conquered. We will be a free and 8 proud nation once again. 9 Everyone will prosper. Every family 10 will thrive. And every day will be filled with 11 opportunity and hope. And very much so, it will 12 be filled with the American dream. We're 13 bringing back the American dream. We're bringing 14 it back at the highest level that you've ever 15 seen. 16 But for that to happen, we must defeat 17 Kamala Harris and stop her radical left agenda 18 with a landslide that is too big to rig. So, you 19 need to get out and vote. Get your husband off 20 the couch. The football game doesn't mean a damn 21 thing. You got to get out and vote. You're 22 going to vote for the president, Harry. We're 23 going to save our country. 24 For the past nine years, we have been 25 fighting against the most sinister and corrupt</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 well of it. But we're going to bring it back and 2 we're going to bring it back strong. And I hope 3 you go out and vote. You got to vote for it. 4 You got to vote. It would be such an honor to 5 win New York. Hasn't been done in decades. 6 Hasn't been done in so long. It hasn't been done 7 in so long. 8 They all say, sir, you're wasting your 9 money. I don't think so. Your crime is through 10 the roof. Everything is through the roof. I 11 remember during the day they said, no, sir, this 12 stupid person named David Muir from ABC Fake 13 News, he said, sir, crime is not through the 14 roof. Crime is down. I said, no, it's not. I 15 said, it's not down, it's up. It's down. I was 16 like debating three people. And him, I had that 17 person next to him who I never even heard of. 18 But it turned out the following day they released 19 the stats, and crime was up 45 percent. And what 20 a shame. What a shame. 21 We really need a fair press in this 22 country. If we have a fair press that's going to 23 be 50 percent of the battle of bringing it back. 24 But this is the city where I was born and raised. 25 And this is the town that taught me that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p>
<p>1 forces on Earth. With your vote in this 2 election, you could show them once and for all 3 that this nation does not belong to them. This 4 nation belongs to you. It belongs to you. 5 No city embodies the spirit, energy, 6 and potential of the American people more than 7 where we are gathered tonight. We want to win 8 our country, but we also want to win New York and 9 make it safe and strong and beautiful and 10 affordable and vibrant again. And we're going to 11 do that. And we'll work with the mayor, and 12 we'll work with the governor. We're going to do 13 that. We're going to make it great. 14 You know, when I left for Washington 15 eight years ago, we had a horrible mayor named de 16 Blasio. He was a horrible, horrible... And 17 things you could see, they weren't being properly 18 done, but still it was a place that people wanted 19 to be and all. But since then, our federal 20 government, what they've done to this place, what 21 they've done to the state, and I mean to force 22 hundreds of thousands of really rough people into 23 this beautiful... I call it a beautiful oasis. 24 When I left, New York was the place you 25 wanted to be. And now people just don't speak</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p>	<p>1 Americans can do anything when they want to. So, 2 no matter our differences when we work together 3 there is nothing that we cannot achieve. 4 From New York to Las Vegas. From 5 Philadelphia to Phoenix. From Chicago to 6 Charlotte. From Atlanta to Detroit. This nation 7 was built by generations of American patriots who 8 gave everything they had for our rights, our 9 future and for our freedom. Through freezing 10 cold winters and hot scorching summers. Through 11 storms and setbacks and conflicts and danger. 12 Our American ancestors pushed onward. Marched 13 forward and overcame every single obstacle that 14 stood in their way. 15 Together they crossed the oceans. 16 Settled a continent. Tamed the wilderness. Laid 17 down the railroads. Raised up those mighty 18 skyscrapers. Built the highways. Won two world 19 wars. Defeated fascism and communism. And 20 launched American astronauts to the moon. 21 It was hard working patriots like you 22 who built this country. And nine days from now 23 it's hard-working patriots like you who are going 24 to save our country. After all we have been 25 through together. We stand on the verge of the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p>

<p>1 four greatest years in the history of the USA. 2 With your help from now until election day. We 3 will restore America's promise. We will put 4 America first and we will take back the nation 5 that we all love. 6 We bleed the same blood. We share the 7 same home, and we salute the same great American 8 flag. We are one people. One family. And one 9 glorious nation under God. We will never give 10 in. We will never give up. We will never ever 11 back down. And we will never ever ever ever 12 surrender. 13 Together we will fight fight fight. 14 And we will win win win. We're going to win win 15 win. November 5th will be the most important day 16 in the history of our country. And together we 17 will make America powerful again. We will make 18 America wealthy again. We will make America 19 healthy again. We will make America strong 20 again. We will make America proud again. We 21 will make America safe again. And we will make 22 America great again. 23 Thank you, New York. God bless you. 24 God bless you all. Thank you. 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p>	
<p>1 CERTIFICATION 2 3 I, Sonya Ledanski Hyde, certify that the 4 foregoing transcript is a true and accurate 5 record of the proceedings. 6 7 8 9  10 11 Veritext Legal Solutions 12 330 Old Country Road 13 Suite 300 14 Mineola, NY 11501 15 16 Date: February 17, 2025 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p>	

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December 8, 2024 Meet the Press
Kristen Welker's Interview with President-Elect
Donald Trump
Panel Discussion

<p>1 KRISTEN WELKER: This Sunday: return to 2 office. My exclusive interview with President- 3 elect Donald Trump. His plans for the economy, 4 and his promises for mass deportation.</p> <p>5 KRISTEN WELKER: Is it your plan to 6 deport everyone who is here illegally over the 7 next four years?</p> <p>8 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I think 9 you have to do it</p> <p>10 KRISTEN WELKER: And will he seek 11 retribution against his political enemies? Are 12 you going to go after Joe Biden?</p> <p>13 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I'm really 14 looking to make our country successful. I'm not 15 looking to go back into the past. Retribution 16 will be through success.</p> <p>17 KRISTEN WELKER: Plus, his vow to 18 pardon those convicted of attacking the Capitol 19 on January 6th.</p> <p>20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I'm going to 21 be acting very quickly.</p> <p>22 KRISTEN WELKER: Within your first 100 23 days, first day?</p> <p>24 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: First day.</p> <p>25 KRISTEN WELKER: And now that he's won</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 ranging conversation about what these next four 2 years will look like. He told me his first 100 3 days will focus on bringing down prices, 4 addressing the border and getting his cabinet 5 picks confirmed. And I asked him what he'll do 6 on his first day in office.</p> <p>7 [BEGIN TAPE]</p> <p>8 KRISTEN WELKER: I understand that on 9 day one you're going to be signing a flurry of 10 executive orders.</p> <p>11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yes. A lot.</p> <p>12 KRISTEN WELKER: Can you give me just-- 13 what are the top ones people should know about?</p> <p>14 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, a lot of 15 it will have to do with economics. A lot's going 16 to have to do with energy. A lot's having to do 17 with the border. We're going to immediately 18 strengthen up the border and do a real job. And 19 some of the basics.</p> <p>20 [END TAPE]</p> <p>21 KRISTEN WELKER: I began the interview 22 with one of the top issues for voters: the 23 economy and the cost of living.</p> <p>24 [BEGIN TAPE]</p> <p>25 KRISTEN WELKER: I want to delve into</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p>
<p>1 the 2024 election, has he changed his mind about 2 his 2020 loss?</p> <p>3 For the sake of unifying this 4 country, will you concede the 2020 election and 5 turn the page on that chapter?</p> <p>6 Joining me for insight and analysis are 7 NBC News Managing Washington Editor Carol Lee, 8 Politico "Playbook" Co-author Eugene Daniels, 9 Marc Short, former Chief of Staff to Vice 10 President Mike Pence and former White House Press 11 Secretary Jen Psaki. Welcome to Sunday, and a 12 special edition of Meet the Press.</p> <p>13 ANNOUNCER: From NBC News in 14 Washington, the longest-running show in 15 television history, this is a special edition of 16 Meet the Press with Kristen Welker.</p> <p>17 KRISTEN WELKER: Good Sunday morning. 18 President-elect Donald Trump is the first 19 president to win non-consecutive terms since 20 Grover Cleveland and we haven't heard from him 21 extensively since his decisive victory until now. 22 I sat down with the president-elect at Trump 23 Tower in New York on Friday for his first 24 broadcast interview since winning the election. 25 We spoke for nearly an hour and a half in a wide-</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p>	<p>1 one of your signature promises on the campaign 2 trail, which was to end inflation, to lower 3 prices. You are now proposing tariffs against 4 the United States' three biggest trading 5 partners. Economists of all stripes say that 6 ultimately consumers pay the price of tariffs.</p> <p>7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I don't 8 believe that.</p> <p>9 KRISTEN WELKER: Can you guarantee 10 American families won't pay more?</p> <p>11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I can't 12 guarantee anything. I can't guarantee tomorrow. 13 But I can say that if you look at my -- just pre- 14 Covid, we had the greatest economy in the history 15 of our country. And I had a lot of tariffs on a 16 lot of different countries, but in particular 17 China. We took in hundreds of billions of 18 dollars and we had no inflation. In fact, when I 19 handed it over, they didn't have inflation for a 20 year and a half. They went almost two years just 21 based on what I had created. And then they 22 created inflation with energy and with spending 23 too much. So, I think we will -- I'm a big 24 believer in tariffs. I think tariffs are the 25 most beautiful word. I think they're beautiful.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p>

<p>1 It's going to make us rich. We're subsidizing 2 Canada to the tune over \$100 billion a year. 3 We're subsidizing Mexico for almost \$300 billion. 4 We shouldn't be -- why are we subsidizing these 5 countries? If we're going to subsidize them, let 6 them become a state. We're subsidizing Mexico 7 and we're subsidizing Canada and we're 8 subsidizing many countries all over the world. 9 And all I want to do is I want to have a level, 10 fast, but fair playing field.</p> <p>11 KRISTEN WELKER: Sir, your previous 12 tariffs during your first administration cost 13 Americans some \$80 billion, and now you have 14 major companies from Walmart, Black & Decker, 15 AutoZone, saying that any tariffs are going to 16 force them to drive up prices for their 17 consumers. How do you make sure that these CEOs, 18 that these companies don't, in fact, pass on the 19 cost of tariffs to their consumers?</p> <p>20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: They cost 21 Americans nothing. They made a great economy for 22 us. They also solve another problem. If we were 23 going to have problems having to do with wars and 24 having to do with other things, tariffs -- I have 25 stopped wars with tariffs by saying, "You guys</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 about 15 seconds after the call ended. It was at 2 Mar-a-Lago, we were having dinner, talking about 3 it. I said, "You have to close up your borders," 4 because they're coming in the northern border 5 too, a lot. Not like the southern border, but 6 they're coming in the Canadian border a lot. And 7 drugs are pouring in. Almost as importantly, 8 drugs are pouring in. Maybe more importantly. 9 Drugs are pouring in at levels never seen before, 10 10 times what we had. They're just pouring in. 11 We can't have open borders. And I said to the 12 president of Mexico and to Justin Trudeau, "If it 13 doesn't stop, I'm going to put tariffs on your 14 country at about 25 percent.</p> <p>15 KRISTEN WELKER: The chairman of the 16 Federal Reserve, Jerome Powell, said he will not 17 leave his post even if you ask him to. Will you 18 try to replace Jerome Powell?</p> <p>19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, I don't 20 think so. I don't see it. But, I don't -- I 21 think if I told him to, he would. But if I asked 22 him to, he probably wouldn't. But if I told him 23 to, he would.</p> <p>24 KRISTEN WELKER: You don't have plans 25 to do that right now?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p>
<p>1 want to fight, it's great. But both of you are 2 going to pay tariffs to the United States at 100 3 percent." And -- they have many purposes, 4 tariffs, if properly used. I don't say you use 5 them like a madman. I say properly used. But it 6 didn't cost this country anything. It made this 7 country money. And we never really got the 8 chance to go all out because we had to fight 9 Covid in the last part, and we did it very 10 successfully. And when I handed it over to 11 Biden, the stock market was higher than what it 12 was just previous to Covid coming in. It was 13 actually higher. Tariffs are a -- properly used, 14 are a very powerful tool, not only economically, 15 but also for getting other things outside of 16 economics.</p> <p>17 KRISTEN WELKER: Are you actually going 18 to impose these tariffs or are they a negotiating 19 tactic?</p> <p>20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I'll 21 give you an example. With Canada, and in 22 particular Mexico, we have millions of people 23 pouring into our country. You agree with that. 24 I spoke with the -- both -- I spoke with Justin 25 Trudeau. In fact, he flew to Mar-a-Lago, within</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, I don't.</p> <p>2 KRISTEN WELKER: Okay. Let's talk 3 about mass deportation --</p> <p>4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Okay.</p> <p>5 KRISTEN WELKER: -- one of your big 6 agenda items. You've talked about prioritizing 7 people who have criminal history.</p> <p>8 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Correct.</p> <p>9 KRISTEN WELKER: But is it your plan to 10 deport everyone who is here illegally over the 11 next four years?</p> <p>12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I think 13 you have to do it, and it's a hard -- it's a very 14 tough thing to do. It's -- but you have to have, 15 you know, you have rules, regulations, laws. 16 They came in illegally. You know the people that 17 have been treated very unfairly are the people 18 that have been online for ten years to come into 19 the country. And we're going to make it very 20 easy for people to come in in terms of they have 21 to pass the test. They have to be able to tell 22 you what the Statue of Liberty is. They have to 23 tell you a little bit about our country. They 24 have to love our country. They can't come out of 25 prisons. We don't want people that are in for</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p>

<p>1 murder. So, we had 11,000 and 13,000, different 2 estimates. 13,099 murderers released into our 3 country over the last three years. They're 4 walking down the streets. They're walking next 5 to you and your family. And they're very 6 dangerous people – 7 KRISTEN WELKER: The 13,000 figure I 8 think goes back about 40 years. 9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: It goes -- 10 nope. No, it doesn't 11 KRISTEN WELKER: That 13,000 figure. 12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: It's within 13 the three-year period. It's during the Biden 14 term. No, that was a fiction that they put that 15 out. This was done by the border patrol. It's 16 13,099 and it's during the Biden period of time. 17 And these are murderers, many of whom murdered 18 more than one person. You don't want those 19 people in this country. 20 KRISTEN WELKER: But you're saying 21 something, sir, that's significant. So, – 22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Go ahead. 23 KRISTEN WELKER: I just want to make 24 sure I'm clear, which is that you're saying, yes, 25 you're going to focus on the people with criminal</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 police say that is not the case in Colorado. 2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Oh, it's 3 totally the case. I mean, they have it on tape. 4 KRISTEN WELKER: You don't believe the 5 local police? 6 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I play it, I 7 used to play it at my rallies every single night. 8 No, it was breaking into doors. They're taking 9 over the building. 10 KRISTEN WELKER: But sir, you raised 11 the point – 12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: And by the 13 way, the police, the police – 14 KRISTEN WELKER: Yeah. 15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- are afraid 16 to do anything. 17 KRISTEN WELKER: You, you raised the 18 point that the logistics are complicated. You 19 said it yourself – 20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Sure they are. 21 But everything's complicated. 22 KRISTEN WELKER: -- yeah, you need 24 23 times more ICE detention capacity just to deport 24 1 million people per year, not to mention more 25 agents, more judges, more planes. Is it</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p>
<p>1 histories, but everyone who's here illegally has 2 to go, is what you're saying. 3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I'm saying 4 this. We have to get the criminals out of our 5 country. We have to get people that were taken 6 out of mental institutions and put them back into 7 their mental institution no matter what country 8 it is. Do you know that in Venezuela their 9 prisons are, are at the lowest point in terms of 10 emptiness that they've ever been? They're taking 11 their people out of those prisons by the 12 thousands and they're drop -- and just to get 13 back, because I know exactly what you're getting 14 at. Number one, we're doing criminals and we're 15 going to do them really rapidly. We're getting 16 the worst gang probably with MS-13 and the 17 Venezuelan gangs are the worst in the world. 18 They're vicious, violent people. And you've seen 19 what they've done in Colorado and other places. 20 They're taking over, they're literally taking 21 over apartment complexes and doing it with 22 impunity. They don't care. They couldn't -- 23 they just are -- they're in the real estate 24 business, okay? 25 KRISTEN WELKER: You know that local</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p>	<p>1 realistic to deport everyone who's here 2 illegally? 3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: You have no 4 choice. First of all, they're costing us a 5 fortune. But we're starting with the criminals 6 and we've got to do it. And then we're starting 7 with others and we're going to see how it goes. 8 KRISTEN WELKER: Who are the others? 9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Others are 10 other people outside of criminals. We have 11 convicted murderers. And we don't mean people 12 that are even on trial. We have people that have 13 murdered numerous people are on our streets and 14 in our farms and we have to get them out of our 15 country. 16 KRISTEN WELKER: What about dreamers, 17 sir? Dreamers, who were brought to this country 18 illegally as children. You said once back in 19 2017 they, quote, "Shouldn't be very worried 20 about being deported." Should they be worried 21 now? 22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: The dreamers 23 are going to come later, and we have to do 24 something about the dreamers because these are 25 people that have been brought here at a very</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p>

<p>1 young age. And many of these are middle-aged 2 people now. They don't even speak the language 3 of their country. And yes, we're going to do 4 something about the dreamers. And – 5 KRISTEN WELKER: What does that mean? 6 What are you going to do? 7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I will work 8 with the Democrats on a plan. And if we can come 9 up with a plan, but the Democrats have made it 10 very, very difficult to do anything. Republicans 11 are very open to the dreamers. The dreamers, 12 we're talking many years ago they were brought 13 into this country. Many years ago. Some of them 14 are no longer young people. And in many cases, 15 they've become successful. They have great jobs. 16 In some cases they have small businesses. Some 17 cases they might have large businesses. And 18 we're going to have to do something with them. 19 And – 20 KRISTEN WELKER: You want them to be 21 able to stay, that's what you're saying? 22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I do. I want 23 to be able to work something out, and it 24 should've been able to be worked out over the 25 last three or four years and it never got worked</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 up families, so the only way you don't break up 2 the family is you keep them together and you have 3 to send them all back. 4 KRISTEN WELKER: Even kids who are here 5 legally? 6 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, what 7 you've got to do if they want to stay with their 8 father -- look, we have to have rules and 9 regulations. You can always find something out 10 like, you know, "This doesn't work. That doesn't 11 work." I'll tell you what's going to be 12 horrible, when we take a wonderful young woman 13 who's with a criminal. And they show the woman, 14 and she could stay by the law, but they show the 15 woman being taken out. Or they want her out and 16 your cameras are focused on her as she's crying 17 as she's being taken out of our country. And 18 then the public turns against us. But we have to 19 do our job. And you have to have a series of 20 standards and a series of laws. And in the end, 21 look, our country is a mess. 22 KRISTEN WELKER: Let me ask you about 23 some of your other promises on this topic. 24 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Okay. Yeah. 25 KRISTEN WELKER: You promised to end</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p>
<p>1 out. You know, Biden could've done it because he 2 controlled, you know, Congress to a certain 3 extent, right? He could've done something, but 4 they didn't do it. I never understood why 5 because they always seemed to want to do it, but 6 then when it comes down to it, they don't. I 7 think we can work with the Democrats and work 8 something out. 9 KRISTEN WELKER: Let me ask you about 10 another group of people, the estimated 4 million 11 families in America who have mixed immigration 12 status. So, I'm talking about parents who might 13 be here illegally – 14 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. 15 KRISTEN WELKER: -- but the kids are 16 here legally. Your Border Czar Tom Homan – 17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: You're talking 18 about separation? 19 KRISTEN WELKER: Well, I mean there are 20 two aspects to this. Your Border Czar Tom Homan 21 said they can be deported together. 22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Correct. 23 KRISTEN WELKER: Is that the plan? 24 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, that way 25 you keep the -- well, I don't want to be breaking</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p>	<p>1 birthright citizenship on day one. 2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Correct. 3 KRISTEN WELKER: Is that still your 4 plan? 5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. 6 Absolutely. 7 KRISTEN WELKER: The 14th Amendment, 8 though, says that, quote, "All persons born in 9 the United States are citizens." 10 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. 11 KRISTEN WELKER: Can you get around the 12 14th Amendment with an executive action? 13 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, we're 14 going to have to get it changed. We'll maybe 15 have to go back to the people. But we have to 16 end it. We're the only country that has it, you 17 know. 18 KRISTEN WELKER: Through an executive 19 action? You're going to – 20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: You know we're 21 the only country that has it. Do you know if 22 somebody sets a foot, just a foot, one foot, you 23 don't need two, on our land, "Congratulations you 24 are now a citizen of the United States of 25 America." Yes, we're going to end that because</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p>

<p>1 it's ridiculous.</p> <p>2 KRISTEN WELKER: Through executive</p> <p>3 action?</p> <p>4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Do you know --</p> <p>5 well, if we can, through executive action. I was</p> <p>6 going to do it through executive action but then</p> <p>7 we had to fix COVID first, to be honest with you.</p> <p>8 We have to end it.</p> <p>9 KRISTEN WELKER: Let's talk about</p> <p>10 health care. I've been talking to Republican</p> <p>11 lawmakers on Capitol Hill. They say it's no</p> <p>12 longer feasible to repeal and replace Obamacare</p> <p>13 because it's so entrenched in the system. Do you</p> <p>14 see it that way? Is that now off the table,</p> <p>15 repealing and replacing Obamacare?</p> <p>16 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: So, when John</p> <p>17 McCain let us down by voting, and Murkowski and</p> <p>18 Collins, and whoever it was that voted against,</p> <p>19 but they really let us down. They did us a great</p> <p>20 disservice, because we would've had great health</p> <p>21 -- Obamacare is lousy health care. It's very</p> <p>22 expensive health care for the people. It's also</p> <p>23 expensive for the country, but for the people.</p> <p>24 It's lousy health care. When John McCain gave</p> <p>25 his thumbs down after saying for ten years that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 KRISTEN WELKER: You did try to</p> <p>2 overturn it. You did have your Justice</p> <p>3 Department try to direct the Supreme Court to</p> <p>4 overturn it.</p> <p>5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, we had a</p> <p>6 little bit of a surprising opinion, to be honest</p> <p>7 with you. If it would've been overturned, we</p> <p>8 would've had much better health care right now.</p> <p>9 But right now we have something that I made the</p> <p>10 best of. I could've made the worst of it and it</p> <p>11 would've fallen by the wayside. I did the right</p> <p>12 thing from a human standpoint. But, you know,</p> <p>13 I'm sort of proud of my decision. At the same</p> <p>14 time, sometimes I regret it. I told the people</p> <p>15 and I gave them the money to do it. I said, "Fix</p> <p>16 it. Make it work." Because people would've</p> <p>17 suffered. But it's too bad that they voted no.</p> <p>18 I wish John McCain, I wish -- he fought for ten</p> <p>19 years on repairing, replacing Obamacare. For ten</p> <p>20 years. And then he voted against. Nobody</p> <p>21 understands it.</p> <p>22 KRISTEN WELKER: Sir, you said during</p> <p>23 the campaign you had concepts of a plan. Do you</p> <p>24 have an actual plan at this point for health</p> <p>25 care?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p>
<p>1 he wants to repeal and replace, okay, and then he</p> <p>2 came out, he put his now famous thumbs down and</p> <p>3 he became a hero to the left, just let me just</p> <p>4 tell you, if we find something better, I would</p> <p>5 love to do it. But unless we find -- but, one</p> <p>6 thing I have to say, I inherited Obamacare, or</p> <p>7 anything else you want -- it's got about 20</p> <p>8 names. But I inherited it. And I had a decision</p> <p>9 to make with health and human services. I had a</p> <p>10 big decision to make. Do I make it as good as we</p> <p>11 can make it or do I let it rot? And a lot of</p> <p>12 political people said, "Let it rot and let it be</p> <p>13 a failure." I said, "That's not the right thing</p> <p>14 to do." And I had very good people in the</p> <p>15 medical area that handled that. And I said,</p> <p>16 "What do you want to do?" I said, "We really</p> <p>17 have an obligation to make it as good as we can,"</p> <p>18 and we did. We made it as good as we can make</p> <p>19 it. Instead of, instead of making it bad, where</p> <p>20 everybody would be calling for its repeal, I made</p> <p>21 it so that it works. Now, it works --</p> <p>22 KRISTEN WELKER: But you did try to</p> <p>23 overturn it, sir.</p> <p>24 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, it's</p> <p>25 lousy. No, no.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p>	<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yes. We have</p> <p>2 concepts of a plan that would be better. But --</p> <p>3 KRISTEN WELKER: Still just concepts?</p> <p>4 Do you have a fully developed plan?</p> <p>5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Let me</p> <p>6 explain. We have the biggest health care</p> <p>7 companies looking at it. We have doctors who are</p> <p>8 always looking. Because Obamacare stinks. It's</p> <p>9 lousy. There are better answers. If we come up</p> <p>10 with a better answer, I would present that answer</p> <p>11 to Democrats and to everybody else and I'd do</p> <p>12 something about it. But until we have that or</p> <p>13 until they can approve it -- but we're not going</p> <p>14 to go through the big deal. I am the one that</p> <p>15 saved Obamacare, I will say. And I did the right</p> <p>16 thing. I could've done the more political thing</p> <p>17 and killed it. And all I had to do is starve it</p> <p>18 to death.</p> <p>19 KRISTEN WELKER: You did try to have</p> <p>20 your Justice Department effectively kill it,</p> <p>21 though, sir.</p> <p>22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, no. Kill</p> <p>23 it from a legal standpoint. But from a physical</p> <p>24 standpoint, I made it work.</p> <p>25 KRISTEN WELKER: In -- in your concepts</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p>

<p>1 of a plan, sir, will people with preexisting 2 conditions still have coverage? And can you 3 guarantee their prices will not go up? 4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: The answer is 5 yes, they'll have coverage. You have to have it 6 -- 7 KRISTEN WELKER: And what about their 8 prices -- 9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- because you 10 know what, it's -- 11 KRISTEN WELKER: What about their 12 prices, sir? 13 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I want the 14 prices to go down. I want to have better 15 healthcare for less money, and there are ways of 16 doing it, I believe. 17 KRISTEN WELKER: Let's talk about 18 abortion, sir. You have taken responsibility for 19 overturning Roe v. Wade. You've said that 20 abortion is now a state issue. There are steps 21 that you could take, though, as president to 22 restrict abortion through executive action 23 without Congress. More than half of abortions in 24 this country are medication abortions. Will you 25 restrict the availability of abortion pills when</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 army veteran, is facing allegations of past 2 sexual misconduct and excessive drinking, which 3 he denies. Mr. Trump told me he has confidence 4 in Hegseth. I also asked him about his choice 5 for FBI director, Kash Patel, a hardline critic 6 of the very agency he's been tapped to lead. 7 [BEGIN TAPE] 8 KRISTEN WELKER: You named Kash Patel 9 to be the next FBI director. 10 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. 11 KRISTEN WELKER: He has a list in his 12 book of 60 people that he calls members of the 13 so-called "deep state." It includes Democrats 14 like Joe Biden and Hillary Clinton. It includes 15 former members of your cabinet, from Bill Barr to 16 Christopher Wray. You campaigned on destroying 17 the deep state. Do you want Kash Patel to launch 18 investigations into people on that list? 19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No. I mean, 20 he's going to do what he thinks is right. And I 21 will -- 22 KRISTEN WELKER: Well, do you think 23 that's right? 24 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- and I will 25 --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p>
<p>1 you're in office? 2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I'll probably 3 -- I'll probably stay with exactly what I've been 4 saying for the last two years. And the answer is 5 no. 6 KRISTEN WELKER: You commit to that? 7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I 8 commit. I mean, are -- things do -- things 9 change. I think they change. I hate to go on 10 shows like Joe Biden, "I'm not going to give my 11 son a pardon. I will not under any circumstances 12 give him a pardon." I watched this and I always 13 knew he was going to give him a pardon. And so, 14 I don't like putting myself in a position like 15 that. So, things do change. But I don't think 16 it's going to change at all. 17 [END TAPE] 18 KRISTEN WELKER: And when we come back, 19 will President-elect Trump direct his FBI 20 director and attorney general to go after his 21 political enemies? 22 KRISTEN WELKER: Welcome back. In our 23 interview, President-elect Trump defended some of 24 his cabinet picks, including his embattled choice 25 for defense secretary, Pete Hegseth. Hegseth, an</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p>	<p>1 KRISTEN WELKER: Do you think that's 2 right, sir? 3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: If they think 4 that somebody was dishonest or crooked or a 5 corrupt politician, I think he probably has an 6 obligation to do it, but -- 7 KRISTEN WELKER: Are you going to 8 direct him to do it? 9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No. Not at 10 all. Not at all. We have two great people that 11 -- we have him, and we have Pam. And Pam Bondi 12 has been like a rocket ship. She's very popular 13 and very good and very fair. And Kash Patel is 14 very fair. I'll tell you. I thought Kash may be 15 difficult because he's, you know, a strong 16 conservative voice, and I don't know of anybody 17 that's not singing his praises. The other day, I 18 was watching, and Trey Gowdy, who's a moderate 19 person and very smart and very respected in the 20 party, he's Kash's biggest fan. He said, "This 21 is the most misunderstood man in politics. He's 22 great." I guess they worked together on the 23 Russia hoax or something, and Trey Gowdy became a 24 fan. Trey, you know, Trey Gowdy. Everybody 25 respects him, and, you know, just like him,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>

<p>1 others also, I don't know of one negative vote -- 2 I don't think he's going to have any negative 3 votes. 4 KRISTEN WELKER: Is it your 5 expectation, though, that Kash Patel will pursue 6 investigations against your political enemies? 7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, I don't 8 think so. 9 KRISTEN WELKER: Do you want to see 10 that happen? 11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: If they were 12 crooked, if they did something wrong, if they 13 have broken the law, probably. They went after 14 me. You know, they went after me and I did 15 nothing wrong. 16 KRISTEN WELKER: Well, let me ask you 17 this. You said, President Biden, quote, that 18 you're going to appoint a real special prosecutor 19 to go after Joe Biden. You said that during -- 20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Where did I 21 say that? 22 KRISTEN WELKER: -- the campaign 23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Where? 24 KRISTEN WELKER: You said that on Truth 25 Social, June 12, 2023: "I will appoint a real</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 You know, they like to say immigration, I break 2 it down more to the border, but I won on the 3 border, and I won on groceries. Very simple 4 word, groceries. Like almost -- you know, who 5 uses the word? I started using the word -- the 6 groceries. When you buy apples, when you buy 7 bacon, when you buy eggs, they would double and 8 triple the price over a short period of time, and 9 I won an election based on that. We're going to 10 bring those prices way down. 11 KRISTEN WELKER: I want to pause here, 12 because what you're saying is significant. 13 Because you wrote on Truth 14 Social in 2023 that you're going to 15 appoint a real special prosecutor to go after Joe 16 Biden. Now you're saying you're not going to do 17 that. 18 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I will say 19 this, no, I'm not doing that unless I find 20 something that I think is reasonable, but that's 21 not going to be my decision. That's going to be 22 Pam Bondi's decision, and, to a different extent, 23 Kash Patel, assuming they're both there, and I 24 think they're both going to get approved. But I 25 -- I -- you know, while you ask me that, what</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p>
<p>1 special prosecutor to go after the most corrupt 2 president in the history of the United States, 3 Joe Biden -- 4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, that 5 part is true. 6 KRISTEN WELKER: -- and the entire 7 Biden crime family." Are you going to do that? 8 Are you going to go after Joe Biden? 9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I'm really 10 looking to make our country successful. I'm not 11 looking to go back into the past. I'm looking to 12 make our country successful. Retribution will be 13 through success. If we can make our success -- 14 this country successful, that would be my 15 greatest, that would be such a great achievement. 16 Bring it back. We have a country now that's 17 overridden with crime, that has millions of 18 people that shouldn't be here, that should be in 19 prisons in other countries, that should be in 20 mental institutions. We have drug lords being 21 dropped into our country and told never go back 22 to their country. I'm looking to make our 23 country great. I'm looking to get -- bring 24 prices down. Because, you know, I won on two 25 things, the border and more than immigration.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p>	<p>1 they've done to me with weaponization is a 2 disgrace. 3 KRISTEN WELKER: We'll get to some of 4 that, sir -- 5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, no, wait, 6 wait, wait, you can't do one without the other. 7 In the history of our country, nothing like this 8 has ever happened. And I've won these cases. 9 I've won every one and the rest are in the 10 process of being won. Deranged Jack Smith is on 11 his way back to The Hague where he can execute 12 people. This is where he should have stayed. I 13 don't -- I think he's dangerous even being there. 14 But I'll tell you what, what they've done to me 15 in terms of weaponization, indictments, 16 impeachments and everything else. And in the 17 end, it probably helped, because I got the 18 biggest vote, the most votes any Republican's 19 ever gotten in history. 20 KRISTEN WELKER: Do -- Pam Bondi talks 21 about investigating the investigators. Do you 22 want her to investigate Jack Smith based -- 23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I want her to 24 do what she wants to do. 25 KRISTEN WELKER: -- do you want to see</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 29</p>

<p>1 Jack Smith investigated?</p> <p>2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I think</p> <p>3 he's very corrupt, but I want her to do whatever</p> <p>4 she --</p> <p>5 KRISTEN WELKER: Are you going to</p> <p>6 direct her --</p> <p>7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, I'm not,</p> <p>8 I'm not</p> <p>9 KRISTEN WELKER: -- to prosecute Jack</p> <p>10 Smith?</p> <p>11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: She's a very</p> <p>12 smart person. She's -- She was a great attorney</p> <p>13 general in Florida. She's very experienced. I</p> <p>14 want her to do what she wants to do. I'm not</p> <p>15 going to instruct her to do it, no.</p> <p>16 KRISTEN WELKER: Sir, are you going to</p> <p>17 fire the current FBI director, Christopher Wray,</p> <p>18 who you appointed?</p> <p>19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I can't</p> <p>20 say I'm thrilled with him. He invaded my home.</p> <p>21 I'm suing the country over it. He invaded Mar-a-</p> <p>22 Lago. I'm very unhappy with the things he --</p> <p>23 he's done, and crime is at an all-time high.</p> <p>24 Migrants are pouring into the country that are</p> <p>25 from prisons and from mental institutions, as</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 place, right? Somebody is the man that you're</p> <p>2 talking about.</p> <p>3 KRISTEN WELKER: I asked you last time</p> <p>4 we sat down for an interview if you were going to</p> <p>5 pardon yourself. You said no. But now that</p> <p>6 President Biden has pardoned his son Hunter, are</p> <p>7 you reconsidering? Might you pardon yourself?</p> <p>8 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I didn't do</p> <p>9 anything wrong. I -- I was given the option, and</p> <p>10 the lawyers told me -- a very specific lawyer. I</p> <p>11 don't have to go into who, but very high up in</p> <p>12 the -- in the administration, said, "Sir, if you</p> <p>13 pardon yourself, you're going to look guilty, and</p> <p>14 you did nothing wrong." Oh, I had that option.</p> <p>15 I could've saved myself a lot of legal fees. But</p> <p>16 it turned out that I was right. Look at what's</p> <p>17 gone on. Everything's being dropped. I still</p> <p>18 have a -- Fani Willis, Fani, a total hoax.</p> <p>19 That's a total hoax. Every -- it's all being</p> <p>20 dropped.</p> <p>21 [END TAPE]</p> <p>22 KRISTEN WELKER: I also asked the</p> <p>23 president-elect about NBC News's reporting that</p> <p>24 President Biden is considering preemptive pardons</p> <p>25 for some of the people who have clashed with Mr.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p>
<p>1 we've discussed. I can't say I'm thrilled. I</p> <p>2 don't want to say -- I don't want to, again, I</p> <p>3 don't want to be Joe Biden and give you an answer</p> <p>4 and then do the exact opposite --</p> <p>5 KRISTEN WELKER: We're going to talk</p> <p>6 about that --</p> <p>7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- so I'm not</p> <p>8 going to do that. What I'm going to say is I</p> <p>9 certainly cannot be happy with him. You take a</p> <p>10 look at what's happened. And then when I was</p> <p>11 shot in the ear, he said, "Oh, maybe it was</p> <p>12 shrapnel." Where's the shrapnel coming from? Is</p> <p>13 it coming from -- is it coming from heaven? I</p> <p>14 don't think so. So, we need somebody to</p> <p>15 straighten -- you know, I have a lot of respect</p> <p>16 for the FBI, but the FBI's respect has gone way</p> <p>17 down over the last number of years.</p> <p>18 KRISTEN WELKER: Don't you have to fire</p> <p>19 him in order to make room for Kash Patel --</p> <p>20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah, but --</p> <p>21 KRISTEN WELKER: -- if he is, in fact,</p> <p>22 confirmed?</p> <p>23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I mean,</p> <p>24 it would sort of seem pretty obvious that if Kash</p> <p>25 gets in, he's going to be taking somebody's</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p>	<p>1 Trump, including Senator-elect Adam Schiff, Dr.</p> <p>2 Anthony Fauci, and former Congresswoman Liz</p> <p>3 Cheney. As part of his response, Mr. Trump</p> <p>4 lashed out at the January 6th committee, accusing</p> <p>5 it of unfairly targeting him and even of</p> <p>6 destroying its records, which the committee</p> <p>7 denies.</p> <p>8 [BEGIN TAPE]</p> <p>9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Cheney was</p> <p>10 behind it.</p> <p>11 KRISTEN WELKER: Well --</p> <p>12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: And so was</p> <p>13 Bennie Thompson and everybody on that committee.</p> <p>14 KRISTEN WELKER: We're going to --</p> <p>15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: For what they</p> <p>16 did --</p> <p>17 KRISTEN WELKER: Yeah --</p> <p>18 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- honestly,</p> <p>19 they should go to jail.</p> <p>20 KRISTEN WELKER: So, you think Liz</p> <p>21 Cheney should go to jail?</p> <p>22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: For what they</p> <p>23 did --</p> <p>24 KRISTEN WELKER: Everyone on the</p> <p>25 committee you think --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p>

<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I think 2 everybody – 3 KRISTEN WELKER: -- should go to jail? 4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- on the -- 5 anybody that voted in favor – 6 KRISTEN WELKER: Are you going to 7 direct your FBI director – 8 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No. 9 KRISTEN WELKER: -- and your attorney 10 general to send them to jail? 11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, not at 12 all. I think that they'll have to look at that, 13 but I'm not going to -- I'm going to focus on 14 drill, baby, drill. 15 [END TAPE] 16 KRISTEN WELKER: And I asked President- 17 elect Trump if he plans to follow through on his 18 campaign promise to pardon those who attacked the 19 Capitol on January 6th, including the more than 20 900 people who pleaded guilty to crimes. 21 [BEGIN TAPE] 22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I'm going to 23 look at everything. We're going to look at 24 individual cases – 25 KRISTEN WELKER: Everyone?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 Syrian government fell overnight, a stunning end 2 to the more than 50-year rule of the Assad 3 family, as rebels claim Damascus. I pressed the 4 president-elect on a range of foreign policy 5 issues -- including U.S. support for Ukraine and 6 NATO in his second administration. 7 [BEGIN TAPE] 8 KRISTEN WELKER: Should Ukraine prepare 9 for less aid from the United States after you're 10 sworn in -- 11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Possibly. 12 KRISTEN WELKER: -- to office? 13 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. 14 Probably. Sure. 15 KRISTEN WELKER: You said you can end 16 the war in 24 hours. You've even said you want 17 to try to end it before you're sworn into office 18 -- 19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I'm 20 trying to. I'm trying to end it if I can -- 21 KRISTEN WELKER: You're actively trying 22 to? 23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I am. 24 KRISTEN WELKER: Have you talked to 25 President Putin?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 36</p>
<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. 2 KRISTEN WELKER: Okay. 3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: But I'm going 4 to be acting very quickly. 5 KRISTEN WELKER: Within your first 100 6 days, first day? 7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: First day. 8 KRISTEN WELKER: First day? 9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. I'm 10 looking first day. 11 KRISTEN WELKER: You're going to issue 12 these pardons? 13 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: These people 14 have been there, how long is it? Three, four 15 years. 16 KRISTEN WELKER: Okay. 17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: You know, by 18 the way, they've been in there for years, and 19 they're in a filthy, disgusting place that 20 shouldn't even be allowed to be open. 21 [END TAPE] 22 KRISTEN WELKER: And when we come back, 23 President-elect Trump's message to the people who 24 didn't vote for him. 25 KRISTEN WELKER: Welcome back. The</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 35</p>	<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, I have 2 not. 3 KRISTEN WELKER: You haven't talked to 4 President Putin -- 5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, I have 6 not. 7 KRISTEN WELKER: -- since you've been 8 elected? 9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I mean, no. 10 Well, I don't want to say that. But I haven't 11 spoken to him recently. 12 KRISTEN WELKER: So, you've spoken to 13 President Putin since you've been elected? 14 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I don't want 15 to say that. I don't want to say anything about 16 that because I don't want to do anything that 17 could impede the negotiation. 18 KRISTEN WELKER: But you -- 19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I want to 20 stop-- 21 KRISTEN WELKER: -- have talked about - 22 - 23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Let me tell 24 you what -- 25 KRISTEN WELKER: -- the other world</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p>


<p>1 leaders.</p> <p>2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- I have</p> <p>3 talked about. Let me tell. There are people</p> <p>4 being killed in that war at levels that nobody's</p> <p>5 ever seen before. You have to go back to the</p> <p>6 Second World War, and even that, if you take a</p> <p>7 look -- and you know what it is? It's the</p> <p>8 soldiers largely. The cities have been emptied</p> <p>9 out and demolished. The country has been</p> <p>10 demolished. If I won that election, which you</p> <p>11 know how I feel about it. I won't get into it</p> <p>12 because we don't need to start that argument. I</p> <p>13 think it's an easy argument. It was really</p> <p>14 proven even more conclusively by the win that I</p> <p>15 had on this one. But--</p> <p>16 KRISTEN WELKER: But you did go to --</p> <p>17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- had I --</p> <p>18 KRISTEN WELKER: -- court, sir. And</p> <p>19 you didn't --</p> <p>20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah, well,</p> <p>21 that's your opinion. But I disagree with it.</p> <p>22 Had I assumed, kept control. Number one, Israel</p> <p>23 wouldn't have happened. Number two, Ukraine</p> <p>24 would've never happened. It would've never</p> <p>25 happened, Ukraine, Russia. But the number of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 have to pay their bills. If they pay their</p> <p>2 bills, absolutely.</p> <p>3 KRISTEN WELKER: But not if they don't</p> <p>4 pay their bills?</p> <p>5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: But NATO's</p> <p>6 taking advantage of us. Because we were -- look,</p> <p>7 two things. Number one, they take advantage of</p> <p>8 us on trade, meaning the European nations, okay,</p> <p>9 like terrible. They don't take our cars, they</p> <p>10 don't take our food product, they don't take</p> <p>11 anything. It's a disgrace. And on top of that,</p> <p>12 we defend them. So, it's a double-whammy. So,</p> <p>13 let me just tell you, I was able to get hundreds</p> <p>14 of billions of dollars put into NATO just by a</p> <p>15 tough attitude. I said to the countries, "I'm</p> <p>16 not going to protect you unless you pay," and</p> <p>17 they started paying. And that amounted to more</p> <p>18 than \$600 billion. That's a big thing.</p> <p>19 Otherwise they wouldn't even be fighting. They</p> <p>20 wouldn't have any money to fight. If they're</p> <p>21 paying their bills, and if I think they're doing</p> <p>22 a fair -- they're treating us fairly, the answer</p> <p>23 is absolutely I'd stay with NATO.</p> <p>24 KRISTEN WELKER: But if not, you would</p> <p>25 consider the possibility of getting out?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p>
<p>1 people that are being killed, soldiers, young,</p> <p>2 beautiful soldiers, hundreds of thousands of</p> <p>3 people are being killed. And, you know, it's</p> <p>4 very interesting. It's level. Totally level,</p> <p>5 the battlefields. Totally level. You know</p> <p>6 what's happening? The only thing that stops a</p> <p>7 bullet, you know what it is? Is a body, a human</p> <p>8 body. And the people that are being killed,</p> <p>9 hundreds of thousands on both sides. Russia's</p> <p>10 lost probably 500,000 --</p> <p>11 KRISTEN WELKER: It's devastating.</p> <p>12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Ukraine's lost</p> <p>13 higher than they say, probably 400,000. You're</p> <p>14 talking about hundreds of thousands of bodies</p> <p>15 lying all over the fields. It's the stupidest</p> <p>16 thing I've ever seen, and it should've never been</p> <p>17 allowed to happen. Biden should've been able to</p> <p>18 stop it.</p> <p>19 KRISTEN WELKER: Sir, will the United</p> <p>20 States stay in NATO while you're in office?</p> <p>21 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: In where?</p> <p>22 KRISTEN WELKER: NATO. Do you commit</p> <p>23 that the United States will remain a member of</p> <p>24 NATO while you're in office?</p> <p>25 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Again, they</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p>	<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Absolutely.</p> <p>2 Yeah, absolutely.</p> <p>3 [END TAPE]</p> <p>4 KRISTEN WELKER: The president-elect is</p> <p>5 tasking Elon Musk, the billionaire CEO of Tesla</p> <p>6 and SpaceX, to try to cut government spending</p> <p>7 along with one of Mr. Trump's former primary</p> <p>8 rivals, businessman Vivek Ramaswamy. All of it</p> <p>9 putting a spotlight on what it could mean for</p> <p>10 entitlements and defense spending.</p> <p>11 [BEGIN TAPE]</p> <p>12 KRISTEN WELKER: You've tapped Elon</p> <p>13 Musk, Vivek Ramaswamy to head up this Department</p> <p>14 of Government Efficiency --</p> <p>15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Correct.</p> <p>16 KRISTEN WELKER: -- which proposes cuts</p> <p>17 to the federal government. Think a lot of people</p> <p>18 hear that and they get concerned about Medicare</p> <p>19 and Social Security and Medicaid --</p> <p>20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: You're not</p> <p>21 going to have anything to do --</p> <p>22 KRISTEN WELKER: And defense spending.</p> <p>23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: We're talking</p> <p>24 about --</p> <p>25 KRISTEN WELKER: You won't touch</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p>

<p>1 Medicare --</p> <p>2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- theft --</p> <p>3 KRISTEN WELKER: -- Social Security?</p> <p>4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- abuse,</p> <p>5 fraud. No. I said to people we're not touching</p> <p>6 Social Security, other than we make it more</p> <p>7 efficient. But the people are going to get what</p> <p>8 they're getting.</p> <p>9 KRISTEN WELKER: Okay. Entitlements</p> <p>10 off the table?</p> <p>11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: And we're not</p> <p>12 raising ages or any of that stuff.</p> <p>13 KRISTEN WELKER: Ok. Off the table?</p> <p>14 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I won't do it.</p> <p>15 [END TAPE]</p> <p>16 KRISTEN WELKER: Finally, I asked the</p> <p>17 president-elect about this extraordinary moment</p> <p>18 in time. He is taking office against the</p> <p>19 backdrop of a country that is so sharply divided,</p> <p>20 and when he has yet to concede the 2020 election,</p> <p>21 which he lost.</p> <p>22 [BEGIN TAPE]</p> <p>23 KRISTEN WELKER: And sir, I don't have</p> <p>24 to tell you this, because you've talked about it.</p> <p>25 It comes at a time when the country is deeply</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 KRISTEN WELKER: Sir, Democrats have</p> <p>2 control of the White House now. They didn't in</p> <p>3 2020. If they are going around stealing</p> <p>4 elections, why didn't they do it this time --</p> <p>5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: When you say</p> <p>6 Democrats have control now --</p> <p>7 KRISTEN WELKER: Of the White House.</p> <p>8 So, why didn't they steal this election? Since</p> <p>9 they have more power now?</p> <p>10 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Because I</p> <p>11 think it was too big to rig.</p> <p>12 KRISTEN WELKER: So, you won't --</p> <p>13 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: It was too big</p> <p>14 to rig.</p> <p>15 KRISTEN WELKER: To the people who say</p> <p>16 that you're now directing your Justice Department</p> <p>17 to investigate 2020 and they want to move on --</p> <p>18 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, I think</p> <p>19 Pam is going to be great --</p> <p>20 KRISTEN WELKER: Is that a good use of</p> <p>21 precious resources? Is that what you want them</p> <p>22 to do --</p> <p>23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: By the way,</p> <p>24 just so you know, I have the right to do that but</p> <p>25 I'm not interested in that.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p>
<p>1 divided, and now you're going to be leading this</p> <p>2 country for the next four years. For the sake of</p> <p>3 unifying this country, will you concede the 2020</p> <p>4 election and turn the page on that chapter?</p> <p>5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No. No, why</p> <p>6 would I do that? But let me just tell you --</p> <p>7 KRISTEN WELKER: You won't ever concede</p> <p>8 --</p> <p>9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- when you</p> <p>10 say the country is deeply divided, I'm not the</p> <p>11 president. Joe Biden is the president.</p> <p>12 KRISTEN WELKER: But you're going to be</p> <p>13 the president.</p> <p>14 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, no. I'm</p> <p>15 not the president. So, when you say it's deeply</p> <p>16 divided, I agree. But Biden's the president, I'm</p> <p>17 not. And he has been a divider. And you know</p> <p>18 where he divided it more than anything else, and</p> <p>19 it probably backfired on him. I think definitely</p> <p>20 is weaponization. When he weaponized the Justice</p> <p>21 Department and he went after his political</p> <p>22 opponent, me. He went after his political</p> <p>23 opponent violently because he knew he couldn't</p> <p>24 beat him. And I think it really was a bad thing,</p> <p>25 and it really divided our country.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p>	<p>1 KRISTEN WELKER: Oh, you're not?</p> <p>2 You're not going to do that?</p> <p>3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I'm not</p> <p>4 interested. I have the absolute right. I'm the</p> <p>5 chief law enforcement officer, you do know that.</p> <p>6 I'm the president. But I'm not interested in</p> <p>7 that. You know what I'm interested in?</p> <p>8 Drilling, and getting prices down, and stopping</p> <p>9 people from pouring into our border that come</p> <p>10 from prisons and mental institutions.</p> <p>11 KRISTEN WELKER: One of the things that</p> <p>12 made this campaign unprecedented and</p> <p>13 extraordinary were the horrific attempts against</p> <p>14 your life. Two assassination attempts. Do you</p> <p>15 feel safe going into the White House --</p> <p>16 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I do --</p> <p>17 KRISTEN WELKER: -- for the next four</p> <p>18 years? Why?</p> <p>19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I have</p> <p>20 confidence in Secret Service. I know the people.</p> <p>21 I got to know a lot of them, and I have</p> <p>22 confidence. It was a bad moment. Something</p> <p>23 shouldn't have happened. But I have a lot of</p> <p>24 confidence, and they really stepped it up. They</p> <p>25 were restricted from giving the -- look, I do a</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p>

<p>1 rally, and you were at many of them. And I'd 2 have 50,000 people. Joe would have a rally and 3 he'd have 30 people. And he had more Secret 4 Service than me. My Secret Service was always 5 asking for more manpower slash woman power. They 6 were asking for more and more, and more, and they 7 couldn't get it. I'm not blaming them really, 8 because they were always fighting for more 9 people. And they wouldn't get -- now, boy, do we 10 have it.</p> <p>11 KRISTEN WELKER: I want to ask you, 12 sir, one final question. What do you want to say 13 to Americans who didn't support you in this 14 campaign?</p> <p>15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I'm going to 16 treat you every bit as well as I have treated the 17 greatest MAGA supporters. There's never been 18 anything like MAGA in the history of this 19 country. These people are so dedicated to making 20 America great again. It's very simple. And I'm 21 going to treat them just the same as I treat 22 MAGA. We're going to treat everybody good. We 23 want success for our country, we want safety for 24 our country. You know our country's under 25 threat, as you know. We have tremendous threat</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 the highest anyone -- McLaughlin and Fabrizio 2 said, "George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, if 3 they came back from the dead and they ran as 4 president and vice president, couldn't beat you, 5 sir." We were doing so well. And I was getting 6 along with the left. Let's call it the left. 7 We'll be nice, okay? We're just going to call it 8 -- but I was getting along with people that you 9 would consider liberal or progressive, as they 10 like to say, at levels that I never thought was 11 possible. And you know what it was? Success. 12 Success was bringing the country together, and 13 that's what I want to do.</p> <p>14 [END TAPE]</p> <p>15 KRISTEN WELKER: And when we come back, 16 President-elect Trump gives us a preview of his 17 inaugural address.</p> <p>18 KRISTEN WELKER: Welcome back. When 19 Mr. Trump is sworn in as president in January, he 20 will be the oldest person ever to assume the 21 office. I asked Mr. Trump about what he will say 22 in that inaugural address and whether he will 23 release his medical records.</p> <p>24 [BEGIN TAPE]</p> <p>25 KRISTEN WELKER: Let me ask you, sir,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p>
<p>1 militarily because of the power of weapons and 2 weaponry. There's tremendous threat, nobody 3 talks about it. But it's tremendous threat. I 4 want to treat everybody the same. I want to 5 treat them well. And at the end of this four 6 years -- and I have a big head start, because I 7 was there for four years fairly recently. A lot 8 of bad things were done during the four years 9 that I wasn't there. And mostly -- and what 10 they've done in terms of our reputation overseas 11 -- our reputation is so bad, so shot. I got to 12 bring it back, and I also have to, have to bring 13 back civilization to our country. Our country is 14 a crime pod and we have to get rid of crime. We 15 have so many things to do. We have to do the 16 prices, we have to do all of that. But we have 17 to get the criminals out of our country. We have 18 to bring down crime. People have to be able to 19 walk across the street and buy a loaf of bread 20 without being shot. And that's going to happen. 21 But what I say to them is I love you, and we're 22 going to all work together. And we're going to 23 bring it together. And you know what's going to 24 bring it together? Success. I saw that just 25 prior to COVID coming in, I had polls that were</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p>	<p>1 as you think about your inauguration. I remember 2 your first inaugural address, you talked about 3 American carnage. Have you thought about your 4 message for your second inaugural address?</p> <p>5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I have. It's 6 --</p> <p>7 KRISTEN WELKER: Can you give us a 8 preview?</p> <p>9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- unity. 10 We're going to have a message. It will make you 11 happy: unity. It's going to be a message of 12 unity. And again, I think success brings unity, 13 and I've experienced that. I've experienced it 14 in my first term. As I said, we're going to be 15 talking about unity, and we're going to be 16 talking about success, making our country safe, 17 keeping people that shouldn't be in our country - 18 - we have to do that. I know it doesn't sound 19 nice, but we have to do that. But basically it's 20 going to be about bringing our country together.</p> <p>21 KRISTEN WELKER: Sir, when you think 22 about your time in office, you are making history 23 for a range of reasons, including the fact you 24 will be the oldest person to be sworn into 25 office. Do you commit to releasing your medical</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p>

<p>1 records?</p> <p>2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Sure, I do it</p> <p>3 all the time. I think I've released four of</p> <p>4 them.</p> <p>5 KRISTEN WELKER: Not just a letter</p> <p>6 though. Your -- your full medical report.</p> <p>7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah, I would,</p> <p>8 and I think anybody should. But I -- I mean,</p> <p>9 according to all the reports, I don't want to --</p> <p>10 where's wood? Is this a wood where I can knock</p> <p>11 on wood? But my reports are very good, very</p> <p>12 strong.</p> <p>13 KRISTEN WELKER: So, you plan to</p> <p>14 release them?</p> <p>15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Sure, no</p> <p>16 problem with it.</p> <p>17 [END TAPE]</p> <p>18 KRISTEN WELKER: You can watch our full</p> <p>19 interview with President-elect Donald Trump at</p> <p>20 NBCNews.com. And when we come back, the panel is</p> <p>21 here for reaction.</p> <p>22 (Break)</p> <p>23 KRISTEN WELKER: Welcome back. The</p> <p>24 panel is here. NBC News Managing Washington</p> <p>25 Editor Carol Lee; Eugene Daniels, White House</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 folks should probably be in jail." And so you</p> <p>2 know, that message comes off as a little bit</p> <p>3 mixed. And he's saying it knowing that the</p> <p>4 people that he's putting in these jobs are people</p> <p>5 who share his views on these issues. And so</p> <p>6 it'll be very interesting to see how that plays</p> <p>7 out.</p> <p>8 KRISTEN WELKER: It will be, Eugene.</p> <p>9 And to hear him back away from what he had posted</p> <p>10 on Truth Social, that he did want to go after</p> <p>11 President Biden. He backed away from that. He</p> <p>12 said his success is going to be his retribution.</p> <p>13 But, as Carol notes, there was some mixed</p> <p>14 messaging, broadly speaking. He had some pretty</p> <p>15 strong language for the January 6th Committee.</p> <p>16 EUGENE DANIELS: Yeah. I think one of</p> <p>17 things that was most fascinating is he didn't</p> <p>18 seem very combative in this interview, right?</p> <p>19 Including on those points, right? He said some</p> <p>20 names. He said "Bennie Thompson, Liz Cheney.</p> <p>21 Maybe they should be in jail, maybe not. That's</p> <p>22 someone else's decision." But he didn't want to</p> <p>23 fight with you, right? And that's something that</p> <p>24 he often wants to do. So, it shows you, one,</p> <p>25 that he feels emboldened. He won this election.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p>
<p>1 correspondent for Politico and co-author of</p> <p>2 Politico Playbook; former White House Press</p> <p>3 Secretary Jen Psaki, host of Inside with Jen</p> <p>4 Psaki; and Marc Short, former chief of staff to</p> <p>5 Vice President Mike Pence. Thanks to all of you</p> <p>6 for being here on a very big Sunday. Carol, let</p> <p>7 me start with you. You broke the news earlier</p> <p>8 this week that President Biden was going to</p> <p>9 pardon his son, Hunter. It's just one of the</p> <p>10 many topics we discussed. What were your key</p> <p>11 takeaways from this conversation?</p> <p>12 CAROL LEE: Well, a couple of things,</p> <p>13 Kristen. You know, I was struck by how</p> <p>14 succinctly the president-elect summed up his</p> <p>15 mandate. He said, "I won on the border and I won</p> <p>16 on groceries," and how quickly he plans to move</p> <p>17 on both of those fronts. And then his posture on</p> <p>18 retribution against his perceived political</p> <p>19 adversaries. You know, he is suggesting that</p> <p>20 he'll keep some distance from the FBI and the</p> <p>21 Justice Department in a way, perhaps, he didn't</p> <p>22 during his first term. So, he's saying, you</p> <p>23 know, "Those decisions about investigations,</p> <p>24 they'll be left up to the people that I put in</p> <p>25 those agencies. However, you know, some of these</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p>	<p>1 He feels ready to move on. And I thought what</p> <p>2 was most fascinating is the -- there's no</p> <p>3 ideological purity with him. And that popped up</p> <p>4 over and over and over again, right? Just a</p> <p>5 patchwork of different policy prescriptions for</p> <p>6 things that usually, if you're a Republican,</p> <p>7 there's kind of, you know, "This, this, and this,</p> <p>8 and that's what we care about." That wasn't here</p> <p>9 with Donald Trump. And I think that kind of</p> <p>10 gives voters what they wanted, which was not</p> <p>11 exactly a Republican who's going to do all of the</p> <p>12 things that Republicans typically do.</p> <p>13 KRISTEN WELKER: It's a fascinating way</p> <p>14 to put it, Marc, that there's no ideological</p> <p>15 purity that we heard. But he was very clear</p> <p>16 about what his agenda items were, and he feels</p> <p>17 emboldened that he believes he has a mandate</p> <p>18 after his decisive win.</p> <p>19 MARC SHORT: Well, he should. And I</p> <p>20 thought he looked very relaxed and confident in</p> <p>21 your long interview, covering a lot of topics. I</p> <p>22 do think that you're going to see a flurry of</p> <p>23 activity in the first 100 days from the executive</p> <p>24 branch. But I do think something that's being</p> <p>25 underappreciated here from a legislative agenda</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 53</p>

<p>1 is, what is the legislative agenda? The one item 2 that's really there is going to be trying to 3 renew the tax relief package from 2017. And when 4 that was passed, 12 House Republicans defected. 5 So, we talk about the fact that there are 53 6 Republican senators, which should help in those 7 confirmations. But Speaker Johnson's going to 8 have an enormous task next year, and it's going 9 to be a really hard job. And he really is going 10 to have hardship, one or two members at all to 11 actually can lose. And so getting legislation 12 through the Congress is going to be very 13 difficult. And certainly, if Trump isn't getting 14 his way he is going to blame Senate and House 15 leadership for that.</p> <p>16 JEN PSAKI: And those tax cuts are very 17 unpopular across the country, which is another 18 challenge --</p> <p>19 MARC SHORT: Oh, I don't know about 20 that. Come on.</p> <p>21 JEN PSAKI: They are in every piece of 22 data, Marc --</p> <p>23 MARC SHORT: The economy is one of the 24 reasons he won.</p> <p>25 JEN PSAKI: They're in every piece of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 not a difference in what he intends to do or what 2 he wants the people he's nominating to do.</p> <p>3 KRISTEN WELKER: It's a really critical 4 point. He's also put hardliners in charge of his 5 immigration policy, which I thought it was a big 6 headline for him to say, "We are deporting 7 everyone." Eugene, though he said, yes, he wants 8 to try to work out a deal for Dreamers.</p> <p>9 EUGENE DANIELS: Yeah. I think that is 10 where he's thought the most about, when you're 11 thinking about what his policies are going to be, 12 is immigration. When you went through tick by 13 tick by tick of the kinds of things that we're 14 seeing, he had a lot of ideas. And it was kind 15 of the most clarity we've gotten on immigration 16 from him. I will also say, he and his team feel 17 like he has the backing of the American people, 18 especially on mass deportation. Because in some 19 polls, 53 percent of Americans say that they are 20 for mass deportation. Now, when you dig into 21 kind of what that means and whether you want your 22 neighbors to get out of the country, or you know, 23 what happens with children, or when you see that 24 woman that he's talking about getting pulled 25 away, is that different? And he talked about it,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p>
<p>1 data. That's why it's interesting --</p> <p>2 MARC SHORT: It's one of the reasons he 3 won.</p> <p>4 JEN PSAKI: -- that it's -- it's in his 5 agenda.</p> <p>6 MARC SHORT: If that was the case, 7 Kamala would've done a lot better if that was the 8 case.</p> <p>9 JEN PSAKI: You know, one of the things 10 that struck me, Kristen, yes, the tone was 11 different, but it doesn't mean it's a difference 12 in his priorities or his policies. Because even 13 when it talks -- when you, when you listen to 14 what he had to say about retribution, 15 "Retribution will be through success." That's 16 not saying he's not going to go after his 17 political enemies. What I heard was him trying 18 to give some space for himself for plausible 19 deniability. Because he picked these people, and 20 Carol touched on this -- Pam Bondi and Kash Patel 21 are election deniers. Kash Patel is somebody who 22 has empathized with QAnon. They know what the 23 direction is. He does not need to direct them. 24 This is why he picked them. They have passed the 25 loyalty test. So, what struck me is more tone,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p>	<p>1 I think most interestingly, "The public might 2 turn against us on immigration," so they have to 3 be careful there, is what he's saying.</p> <p>4 KRISTEN WELKER: Carol.</p> <p>5 CAROL LEE: That was what struck me, is 6 that he seemed a little uncertain about how some 7 of this stuff's going to play out. Yes, he's 8 going to do it. But you know, when you talk 9 about birthright citizenship, you know, first of 10 all there are other countries that have 11 birthright citizenship.</p> <p>12 It's not just the United States. But 13 he said, "If we can do it by an executive order. 14 Maybe we'll have to take it to the people," you 15 know, suggesting some sort of constitutional 16 amendment. And on mass deportations, he talked 17 about how this might play out publicly. He talks 18 about the woman who's crying, and the cameras are 19 capturing her as she's being deported. And he 20 said, you know, "Then the public turns against 21 us." So, he's not real confident that this is 22 going to play out exactly how he wants it to be.</p> <p>23 KRISTEN WELKER: Such a revelatory 24 moment there. Jen, we talked about foreign 25 policy as well. Of course we're all watching</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p>

<p>1 what's happening in Syria. The government has 2 been toppled. I talked to him about Ukraine and 3 NATO. Boy, he really left the door open to 4 potentially pulling out of NATO. 5 JEN PSAKI: He certainly did, which I 6 don't think should be a surprise. He also 7 refused, after you pushed him repeatedly, to 8 answer the question as to whether he'd talked to 9 Vladimir Putin. And when you -- 10 KRISTEN WELKER: Yes. I tried. I 11 tried it. 12 JEN PSAKI: Certainly. When you look 13 at the statement he put out in response to Assad 14 fleeing the country, it was almost defensive of 15 Putin and defensive of the Russians' interest. 16 So, this is definitely a massive shift. There is 17 an allegiance, an affinity for Russia that is 18 different than what we have had in Democratic and 19 Republican presidents for decades. 20 KRISTEN WELKER: And Marc, he was very 21 clear, there will likely be less funding for 22 Ukraine, with the last 30 seconds we have. 23 MARC SHORT: Well, sure. That's been 24 his position all along. I think that the ones 25 who are celebrating most right now in the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p>	<p>1 CERTIFICATION 2 3 I, Sonya Ledanski Hyde, certify that the 4 foregoing transcript is a true and accurate 5 record of the proceedings. 6 7 8 9  10 11 Veritext Legal Solutions 12 330 Old Country Road 13 Suite 300 14 Mineola, NY 11501 15 16 Date: February 18, 2025 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p>
<p>1 situation in Syria is the fact that -- I should 2 say, the ones who I think are most concerned are 3 Putin, the Ayatollah, and Tulsi Gabbard. 4 KRISTEN WELKER: And by the way, I 5 asked him about Tulsi Gabbard. He said he has 6 confidence in her and Pete Hegseth, who's also 7 another embattled Cabinet pick. Thank you all 8 for being here for a fantastic conversation. 9 That is all for today. Thank you for watching. 10 We'll be back next week, because if it's Sunday, 11 it is Meet the Press. 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p>	

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Jan. 22, 2025 Fox & Friends Interview
Sean Hannity's Interview with President Donald
Trump


<p>1 SEAN HANNITY: You stated that you will 2 release the files, all of the files, as it 3 relates to the JFK assassination. 4 The moment you walked back in this 5 office, this desk, this room, your carpet. How'd 6 you feel? 7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, it was a 8 lot of work. 9 SEAN HANNITY: Do you believe that 10 moment, people say to me, they see a change in 11 you. Do you believe you've changed? Has this, 12 for example, increased your faith in God? 13 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yes. 14 SEAN HANNITY: All these people, the 15 Biden family members, Joe Biden ran and said he 16 would never do preemptive pardons. It was an 17 issue that came up when you were leaving your 18 first time. 19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Sure. Oh, he 20 thought -- he heard that I was going to do it. I 21 didn't want to do it. I was given the option. 22 SEAN HANNITY: And welcome to Hannity 23 and buckle up for a very special show. After 24 four long years, President Donald Trump is back 25 where he belongs. He is in the Oval Office.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. 2 SEAN HANNITY: -- somebody didn't have 3 consecutive terms. 4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. Well, 5 they say it's historically bigger. I don't know 6 about that. But I can say, it showed us a couple 7 of things. It showed us that the radical left, 8 their philosophies and policies are horrible, 9 they don't work. You look at crime, you look at 10 what's gone on at the border, you look at what's 11 going to happen to crime. I mean, the crime 12 that's going to happen, but I think we got there 13 just in the nick of time. But we still have you 14 covered better than anybody. We have terrorists 15 in our country by the thousands. We have 16 murderers in our country by the tens of 17 thousands. 18 We have numbers that came out, 11,000 19 people that murdered are now free and walking 20 around in our country. And of them, I think 48 21 percent they say killed more than one person, and 22 they're walking around. They came out of jails 23 from other countries. And people, they've 24 emptied their jails. I would -- if I were the 25 President or Prime Minister or something of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p>
<p>1 Earlier, the President, he did welcome us into 2 the White House for an exclusive first interview 3 in front of the Resolute Desk. 4 Mr. President -- 5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Thank you. 6 SEAN HANNITY: Welcome back. 7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Thank you very 8 much. 9 SEAN HANNITY: Let's talk about the 10 moment you walked back in this office, this desk, 11 this room, your carpet. How'd you feel? 12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, it was a 13 lot of work, and as you know, I felt that we 14 shouldn't have had to necessarily be here. It 15 could have been done -- a lot of work could have 16 been -- it would have been over. We wouldn't 17 have inflation, we wouldn't have had the 18 Afghanistan disaster, we wouldn't have had 19 October 7th with Israel where so many people were 20 killed, and you wouldn't have a Ukraine war going 21 on. But with all that being said, I think it's 22 bigger. It's bigger than if it were more 23 traditional. 24 SEAN HANNITY: Only the second time in 25 history --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p>	<p>1 another country, I'd empty my jails right into 2 America, into the United States. Why not? And 3 many of them did it. If you look at Venezuela, 4 their crime rate is down now 78 percent because 5 they took their street gangs, and they moved them 6 into the United States. And you're seeing that 7 in Colorado and Los Angeles and other places, and 8 we're going to take care of it. 9 SEAN HANNITY: So, did Biden really say 10 to you when you came up to the front of your 11 White House, "Welcome home"? 12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, did 13 somebody say that? 14 SEAN HANNITY: I read it somewhere. I 15 don't remember. 16 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I don't know. 17 Maybe he did. I really don't know. 18 SEAN HANNITY: So, you left him a 19 letter. It was funny what Peter Doocy and Peter 20 said, "Oh, Mr. President, did Joe Biden leave you 21 a letter?" 22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. 23 SEAN HANNITY: He did leave you a 24 letter? 25 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: He did.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p>

<p>1 SEAN HANNITY: And you had left him 2 one, but you've never disclosed either one of 3 them. 4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, a lot of 5 people think -- 6 SEAN HANNITY: Now would be a great 7 time. 8 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: You know what 9 was interesting? A lot of people thought it was 10 sort of like a setup with Peter Doocy and myself, 11 and I have a lot of respect for Peter. But he 12 just asked me a question about the letter and 13 then I remember that, you know, there's like a 14 custom. You leave it right in the drawer of that 15 beautiful desk right alongside of us. And so, I 16 opened it up and I actually gave the letter to 17 Peter. 18 SEAN HANNITY: And did he -- he got to 19 read it? 20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I guess. I 21 don't -- I haven't -- I just sent -- 22 SEAN HANNITY: You don't know if he 23 read it? 24 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah, I just 25 sent it to him a little while ago.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 in this office. What people don't know is, over 2 there, there's a little red button you push, you 3 scare people. People think it's the nuclear 4 button, but it's really, you know -- 5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Something 6 else. 7 SEAN HANNITY: It's used for a 8 different purpose. But the question I have was, 9 at any point, did you doubt you would be back 10 here? 11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: So, it's a 12 great question. It's something I don't think 13 about. I never really thought about it. I don't 14 think about, "Gee, will I be back?" I just do 15 it. I get it done. I get things done. I'm good 16 at getting things done, and I set my mind to it. 17 As you know, we had a great election in 2016. I 18 had a much better election in 2020 and if I 19 didn't have that election, I wouldn't have run. 20 If I thought that I didn't get the number of 21 votes and it was reported that I got almost 75 22 million votes and that was their numbers. That 23 wasn't the numbers, that was their numbers. That 24 was more than anybody has gotten in history, any 25 sitting President had ever gotten, and you lost?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p>
<p>1 SEAN HANNITY: All right. Before we 2 get into -- there's so much substance. You are 3 inheriting a lot of problems, a lot of things 4 that actually scare me. And I want to get to all 5 that, and I will get to all of that. 6 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: They're all 7 solvable problems, though. 8 SEAN HANNITY: I agree. 9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: They're all 10 solvable. 11 SEAN HANNITY: Not easy. 12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: With time, 13 effort, money, unfortunately. But they're all 14 solvable problems. We can get our country back. 15 But if we didn't win this race, I really believe 16 our country would have been lost forever. 17 SEAN HANNITY: Were there moments -- I 18 mean, when you think of what they threw at you, 19 and I know you signed this declaration about no 20 more weaponization. And we know that the 21 preemptive part, and this came up on Joe's way 22 out, but you were facing a civil trial, a 23 criminal trial, conviction, sentencing, Jack 24 Smith, D.C., Florida, Fani Willis. I mean, you 25 fought through all of that to get back right here</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 Had I gotten, like, 50 million or 40 million or 2 60 million, I would never have run. But that was 3 like (indiscernible). So, but I had a different 4 attitude. Too big to rig. 5 SEAN HANNITY: Poll came out just in 6 the 24 hours by Insider Advantage, that's Matt 7 Towery. He nailed 2016, 2020 and 2024. Great 8 pollster, as you know. 9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Right. 10 SEAN HANNITY: And he gave you a 56 11 percent approval rating. He also said of 12 Congress, and I had a Town Hall with members of 13 Congress last night, that 70 percent of 14 respondents want Congress to unite behind your 15 agenda. 16 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I watched that 17 show. It was a great show, and you had some 18 great people in the background. I know every one 19 of them, and they're really patriots. I just saw 20 the love. You know, as the speaker, who was 21 doing a terrific job, the speaker is answering 22 questions and I saw the -- like, the 23 acknowledgment and the love they had, and those 24 are tough people behind him. You know, these are 25 not easy people.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p>

<p>1 SEAN HANNITY: There are others that 2 are tougher.</p> <p>3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, I don't 4 know. That's -- this is a tough group if they 5 want to be. They're not -- nobody much tougher. 6 But they're very unified and I think they're 7 going to do a great job.</p> <p>8 SEAN HANNITY: But they have a small 9 majority. You went through over 200 -- since 10 we've got here. And we have breaking news today 11 that we'll get to a minute. And especially as it 12 relates to the border and some other issues. And 13 -- but you're going to need to do some of these 14 things legislatively. You will probably play the 15 largest role --</p> <p>16 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah.</p> <p>17 SEAN HANNITY: -- in uniting them both 18 in the House and Senate. Reconciliation, the 19 Senate has very strict rules governing --</p> <p>20 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Sure.</p> <p>21 SEAN HANNITY: -- how they can do it.</p> <p>22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Sure.</p> <p>23 SEAN HANNITY: Do you -- one big, 24 beautiful bill, two bills? Do you care at this 25 point?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 had FEMA working really well. We had hurricanes 2 in Florida, we had Alabama tornadoes. But unless 3 you have certain types of leadership, it's really 4 -- it gets in the way. And FEMA is going to be a 5 whole big discussion very shortly because I'd 6 rather see the states take care of their own 7 problems. If they have a tornado someplace and 8 if they -- let that state.</p> <p>9 Oklahoma is very competent. I love 10 Oklahoma. 77 out of 77 districts and that's 11 never been done before. I did it three times. I 12 mean, think of it. Three times, never been done. 13 Ronald Reagan had the record, 56, 56 out of 77. 14 I got 77 out of 77. So, you have to love a place 15 like that. I love Oklahoma. But you know what? 16 If they get hit with a tornado or something, let 17 Oklahoma fix it. You don't need -- and then the 18 federal government can help them out with the 19 money.</p> <p>20 SEAN HANNITY: What do you --</p> <p>21 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: But I -- the 22 FEMA is getting in the way of everything, and the 23 Democrats actually use FEMA not to help North 24 Carolina.</p> <p>25 SEAN HANNITY: It makes no sense that -</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p>
<p>1 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I don't care, 2 as long as we get to the final answer. I like 3 the concept of the one bill. I guess I said, 4 "one big, beautiful --" and that's what everyone 5 -- actually, it's sort of a nice sound to it. 6 But I do like that concept. It could be 7 something else; it could be a smaller bill and a 8 big bill.</p> <p>9 SEAN HANNITY: Right.</p> <p>10 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: But as long as 11 we get to the right answer. Now, I will say that 12 Los Angeles has changed everything because a lot 13 of money is going to be necessary for Los 14 Angeles. And a lot of people on the other side 15 want that to happen (indiscernible)</p> <p>16 SEAN HANNITY: North Carolina too.</p> <p>17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Well, they 18 don't care about North Carolina. The Democrats 19 don't care about North Carolina. What they've 20 done with FEMA is so bad. FEMA is a whole 21 another discussion.</p> <p>22 SEAN HANNITY: Yeah.</p> <p>23 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Because all it 24 does is complicate everything. FEMA has not done 25 their job for the last four years. You know, I</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p>	<p>1 -</p> <p>2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: So, I'm 3 stopping on Friday. I'm stopping in North 4 Carolina, first stop.</p> <p>5 SEAN HANNITY: Yeah.</p> <p>6 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Because those 7 people were treated very badly by Democrats. And 8 I'm stopping there. We're going to get that 9 thing straightened out because they're still 10 suffering from a hurricane from months ago.</p> <p>11 SEAN HANNITY: Hurricane Helene.</p> <p>12 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: And then I'm 13 going to -- then I'm going to go to California. 14 I'll go to.</p> <p>15 SEAN HANNITY: Will you meet with 16 Gavin?</p> <p>17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I don't know. 18 I haven't even thought about it. Look, Gavin's 19 got one thing he can do, he can release the water 20 that comes from the north. There is massive 21 amounts of water, rainwater and mountain water 22 that comes through with the snow, comes down as 23 it melts. There's so much water, they're 24 releasing it into the Pacific Ocean. And I told 25 him, it's a political thing for the Democrats. I</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p>

<p>1 don't know.</p> <p>2 SEAN HANNITY: I played the tape. You</p> <p>3 said it to him in front of him in 2018.</p> <p>4 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I said it to</p> <p>5 him in front of the media and everything else,</p> <p>6 and nobody talks about it. The media never picks</p> <p>7 it up. You put it out. I'm so happy to see that</p> <p>8 tape because some people said, "Is that</p> <p>9 possible?"</p> <p>10 SEAN HANNITY: How --</p> <p>11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: They have</p> <p>12 water coming down from the Pacific northwest,</p> <p>13 which is a lot of water. So much water that</p> <p>14 they'd have to let some of it go at some point.</p> <p>15 They don't need reservoirs, they don't need --</p> <p>16 and they're spending all this money on these</p> <p>17 reservoirs, and they're fake reservoirs. You</p> <p>18 know they're concrete.</p> <p>19 SEAN HANNITY: But the reservoirs were</p> <p>20 empty, the hydrants didn't work and they're not</p> <p>21 practicing the science of forestry, which is --</p> <p>22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Their</p> <p>23 sprinklers didn't work in the homes because they</p> <p>24 had no water. Think of it, we have sprinklers.</p> <p>25 Think of it with no water. They didn't have any</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 SEAN HANNITY: And the question you</p> <p>2 asked me, "Maybe in the end it will be better if</p> <p>3 I came back in four years." And we talked about</p> <p>4 history. After World War 2, Winston Churchill</p> <p>5 was thrown out, but they brought him back.</p> <p>6 Grover Cleveland was the only other American</p> <p>7 President that did not serve consecutive terms.</p> <p>8 And my answer to you was, I thought it would be</p> <p>9 bigger if you came back.</p> <p>10 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: It's turning</p> <p>11 out to be bigger. And I think one thing is</p> <p>12 happening is, people are learning that they can't</p> <p>13 govern and that their policies are terrible. I</p> <p>14 mean, they don't want to see a woman get pummeled</p> <p>15 by a man in a boxing ring.</p> <p>16 SEAN HANNITY: No.</p> <p>17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: They don't</p> <p>18 want to see men in women's sports and otherwise.</p> <p>19 They don't want to see them, and they don't want</p> <p>20 to have transgender for everyone. They don't</p> <p>21 want a child leave home as a boy and come back</p> <p>22 two days later as a girl. A parent doesn't want</p> <p>23 to see that. And there are states where that can</p> <p>24 happen. They don't want to see taxes go through</p> <p>25 the roof like, this is the only group of people</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p>
<p>1 water.</p> <p>2 SEAN HANNITY: (indiscernible)</p> <p>3 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Their fire</p> <p>4 hydrants. Yeah, hard to believe this place has</p> <p>5 sprinklers. It's nice. But you don't want to</p> <p>6 lose this office. By the way, how do you like</p> <p>7 it?</p> <p>8 SEAN HANNITY: It's -- well, I'm glad -</p> <p>9 - it's great to be back. I'm not going to lie.</p> <p>10 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: You know I've</p> <p>11 had the biggest people in the world come here.</p> <p>12 And they come into the Oval Office, and they just</p> <p>13 look, and they want time to look. They're</p> <p>14 looking around.</p> <p>15 SEAN HANNITY: You made it.</p> <p>16 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: There's</p> <p>17 Washington, Honest Abe.</p> <p>18 SEAN HANNITY: One day maybe we can do</p> <p>19 a tour. We had a conversation and maybe I</p> <p>20 shouldn't disclose this, but I will. And it was</p> <p>21 after the 2020 election. And you asked me a</p> <p>22 question, and we've known each other for 30</p> <p>23 years. So, we have a friendship, and we have a</p> <p>24 professional relationship.</p> <p>25 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Right.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p>	<p>1 that want to raise your taxes. They say, "We</p> <p>2 want to raise your taxes." You know, if they</p> <p>3 don't work with us on the Trump tax cuts</p> <p>4 extending, that would mean it would go back to</p> <p>5 the taxes. We've got the largest tax cut in</p> <p>6 history. That would mean the taxes would go up</p> <p>7 more than any tax hike in the history of our</p> <p>8 country. And normally you'd say, that's got to</p> <p>9 be the easiest negotiation in history because if</p> <p>10 they did that, how could they ever win an</p> <p>11 election? But they'll fight us on that. They</p> <p>12 fight us on things. It's incredible.</p> <p>13 SEAN HANNITY: Here, I ran into --</p> <p>14 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: They don't use</p> <p>15 common sense. In my opinion, the Democrats don't</p> <p>16 use common sense and that's why they lost.</p> <p>17 SEAN HANNITY: Common sense won the day</p> <p>18 in the election.</p> <p>19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah, but you</p> <p>20 know the amazing thing? I'm watching now. Now</p> <p>21 it's time and you know, a few months have passed,</p> <p>22 and the election is over, and you see what</p> <p>23 happened and it was (indiscernible). I won all</p> <p>24 seven swing states, and we won by millions of</p> <p>25 votes, the popular vote, millions. And nobody</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p>

<p>1 can even believe some of the numbers. And how 2 about with African Americans, with Hispanics, 3 with everything, how well we did. Nobody can 4 believe the numbers.</p> <p>5 SEAN HANNITY: I was --</p> <p>6 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: How about with 7 youth? I won youth by 36 points. Now maybe 8 that's because I went on TikTok. I don't know, 9 but I had -- I'm starting to have a very warm 10 spot in my heart --</p> <p>11 SEAN HANNITY: TikTok is going to be 12 sold, right?</p> <p>13 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I think TikTok 14 (indiscernible)</p> <p>15 SEAN HANNITY: Well, when we spoke, 16 people like Senator --</p> <p>17 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I'll tell you, 18 people want to buy it. People want to buy it.</p> <p>19 SEAN HANNITY: I bet they do. But 20 those that say they know, say it's a spying app 21 for the Communist Chinese.</p> <p>22 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I know, but 23 you could say that about everything made in 24 China. Look, we have our telephones made in 25 China for the most part.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 SEAN HANNITY: And so far, 308 total 2 arrests, 296 detainees. And the first 3 appointment of military assets to the U.S. 4 border, the deployment includes active-duty 5 troops and the National Guard.</p> <p>6 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Right.</p> <p>7 SEAN HANNITY: And here's my biggest 8 fear and concern beyond the arraigining and 9 assassination squads, is we now know 14 million - 10 - we don't know how many got away, we don't know 11 the total number. But we have known terrorists 12 in our country.</p> <p>13 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Mm hmm.</p> <p>14 SEAN HANNITY: We have known murderers, 15 rapists. We have violent criminals, cartel 16 members, gang members. Now, I would imagine, if 17 you came from Iran and Syria and Egypt and 18 Afghanistan and Russia and China and Venezuela, 19 you didn't come here because you want a better 20 life for your children. I would imagine those 21 known terrorists are planning an attack on our 22 homeland. At a moment's notice, you're going to 23 be at the desk, maybe sitting at this desk or 24 maybe up in the residence and they're going to 25 call you down in the situation room because our</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p>
<p>1 SEAN HANNITY: Mm hmm.</p> <p>2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: We have so 3 many things made in China. So, why don't they 4 mention that? You know --</p> <p>5 SEAN HANNITY: Let me address some 6 issues.</p> <p>7 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- the 8 interesting thing with TikTok though, is you're 9 dealing with a lot of young people, so --</p> <p>10 SEAN HANNITY: They love it.</p> <p>11 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- is it that 12 important for China to be spying on young people, 13 on young kids watching crazy videos of things?</p> <p>14 SEAN HANNITY: I don't want China 15 spying on anybody.</p> <p>16 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: No, no, but 17 they make your telephones, and they make your 18 computers, and they make a lot of other things. 19 Isn't that a bigger threat?</p> <p>20 SEAN HANNITY: I'm sure that'll be part 21 of your discussions with President Xi, which I'm 22 going to talk about in a moment. Let me go to 23 the border. We do have breaking news today. I 24 ran into Tom Homan as I was walking in today.</p> <p>25 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Right.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p>	<p>1 homeland is under attack. I would like to be 2 wrong, but when you have known terrorists, you 3 have to believe that they're going to -- they are 4 going to attack our homeland.</p> <p>5 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Mm hmm.</p> <p>6 SEAN HANNITY: That would change their 7 trajectory that moment of your entire presidency. 8 That has to weigh on you.</p> <p>9 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Could be.</p> <p>10 Yeah, it could be. And I know I've watched you 11 for a lot of years, and you actually make one 12 statement before you say that. You say, "One 13 hundred percent certain."</p> <p>14 SEAN HANNITY: I do.</p> <p>15 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: That's a 16 pretty big statement.</p> <p>17 SEAN HANNITY: And then I say, "I pray 18 to God I'm wrong."</p> <p>19 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Yeah. I hope 20 you're wrong too, and I won't comment but I tend 21 to agree with you. It depends. We'll see what 22 happens. Look, we have a lot of great people 23 right now, a lot of great, great people, on this 24 situation. This was a gross miscarriage of 25 common sense to allow people to come in. And I</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p>

<p>1 believe the number is 21 million people and a 2 large percentage of them are criminals, all over 3 the world. This is not just South America. This 4 is -- you know, we talked Venezuela. That's a 5 big abuser, but these are countries from -- these 6 are -- 7 SEAN HANNITY: Iran (indiscernible) 8 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: -- the Congo. 9 Countries that you don't even think of. The 10 Congo has emptied their prisons out into the 11 United States. We're not thinking about the 12 Congo, we're thinking about South America. It's 13 much more than South America. But prisons from 14 all over the world have been emptied out into our 15 country by Biden allowing it to happen. I don't 16 even know if he knew what the hell was going on. 17 But who would want this? I always say to people, 18 you know, you always like to understand, like in 19 a business or you want to understand the other 20 side. Why do they want something? You know, 21 etc., etc., and you figure it out. And there's 22 usually an answer, almost always. 23 I don't understand, why does somebody 24 want to open borders where -- and they say the 25 vote. Okay, but I did well with the Hispanic</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 SEAN HANNITY: Let me ask -- 2 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Sean, who 3 would ask for open borders with people pouring 4 in? Some of whom, I won't get into it, but you 5 can look at them and you can say, "Could be 6 trouble. Could be trouble." There are people 7 coming in -- 8 SEAN HANNITY: There are people with 9 gang tattoos on. 10 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: There are 11 people coming in with tattoos all over their 12 face. Their entire face is covered with tattoos. 13 SEAN HANNITY: That identifies a gang. 14 PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: Typically, you 15 know he's not going to be the head of the local 16 bank. 17 SEAN HANNITY: Hey, Sean Hannity here. 18 Hey, click here to subscribe to Fox News YouTube 19 page and catch our hottest interviews and most 20 compelling analysis. You will not get it 21 anywhere else. 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p>
<p>1 vote if you're looking at Hispanic. They say 2 they do it because they want to -- they're going 3 to stay in power or it's going be better for 4 Democrats. I don't really believe that. Besides 5 that, they cheat so much, they don't have to do 6 that. They cheat so well. They're very good at 7 cheating. The only thing they're good at, 8 really, is cheating. But here's the thing I ask, 9 why would somebody say that open borders are 10 good? Where jails and mental institutions from 11 other countries and gang members, right off the 12 streets of the toughest cities in the world, are 13 being brought to the United States of America and 14 emptied out into our country. Why would anybody 15 that even likes -- you don't have to love our 16 country, you have to like it. Why would anybody 17 that likes our country, the Democrats, allow that 18 to happen? And even now, I watch them on 19 television, they're trying to justify it. You 20 can't justify it. The only reason it can be -- 21 there's two reasons, you're stupid and I don't 22 think they're stupid. I think anybody that 23 cheats that much and that well is not stupid. 24 You're either stupid or you hate the country. 25 Those are the only two reasons.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p>	<p>1 CERTIFICATION 2 3 I, Sonya Ledanski Hyde, certify that the 4 foregoing transcript is a true and accurate 5 record of the proceedings. 6 7 8 9  10 11 Veritext Legal Solutions 12 330 Old Country Road 13 Suite 300 14 Mineola, NY 11501 15 16 Date: February 18, 2025 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>

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Immigration

Relatives and records cast doubt on Guantánamo migrants being ‘worst of the worst’

Details on some of the migrants sent to Guantánamo Bay have begun to emerge. They are young Venezuelan men, and relatives say they have been falsely branded Tren de Aragua gang members.

February 16, 2025

15 min 678



The first U.S. military aircraft to carry detained migrants to Guantánamo Bay in Cuba is boarded from an unspecified location on Feb. 4. (U.S. Department of Homeland Security/Reuters)

By [Silvia Foster-Frau](#), Ana Vanessa Herrero and [María Luisa Paúl](#)

When the first flight of migrants arrived at Guantánamo Bay, Homeland Security Secretary Kristi L. Noem said they were “the worst of the worst.” Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth called them “high-threat” criminals who had crossed the border to bring “violence and mayhem to our communities.”

All were members of a Venezuelan gang called Tren de Aragua, the Trump



Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth called them “high-threat” criminals who had crossed the border to bring “violence and mayhem to our communities.”

All were members of a Venezuelan gang called Tren de Aragua, the Trump administration said, invoking the name of a group the president mentions frequently to explain why a mass deportation is needed. Officials put them in a prison on the U.S. naval station in Cuba created for suspected terrorists after Sept. 11, 2001.

Little was known about the men when they were initially sent to Cuba. Human rights lawyers called Guantánamo a “legal black hole” and lambasted the U.S. government for not allowing them access to the migrants. But through photos released by DHS and accounts from family members, their names have begun to emerge.

In one of the images is a man with his head bent as a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer holds the back of his collar. Relatives have identified him as Luis Alberto Castillo.



Holding tents at the naval station in Guantánamo Bay are seen on Feb. 6. (U.S. Navy/AFP/Getty Images)

In another photo, a bearded man stands in front of a plane and its unfurled ramp. Tilso Gómez’s family says that is him. Nearby is a man with a head full of curly auburn hair. His father insists that is Mayfreed Durán.




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5 4.1 million migrants: Where they're from, where they live in the U.S.

Despite the impression given by Homeland Security officials and others, these three men were taken into custody after crossing the southern border, according to court records and family members — not during a targeted immigration operation in a U.S. city or at a jail or prison while serving a sentence.

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The Washington Post could not find any violent federal criminal record for Castillo and Gómez, while Durán was charged with assaulting, resisting or impeding an officer during a riot at a detention center. An ICE official said that the agency stands by its assertion that all the migrants aboard the initial flight to Guantánamo are Tren de Aragua members. Their relatives firmly deny the accusation.

ICE has now sent at least nine planes carrying migrants to Guantánamo. As of Friday, 126 migrants were detained at the naval station, according to a Defense Department official. Trump wants troops to prepare to house as many as 30,000 more.

The Post spoke with family members of six migrants whose relatives said they have confirmed through photos and lawyers that their loved ones are being held in Guantánamo. The stories of Castillo, Gómez and Durán, as well as Franyer Montes, Diuvar Uzcátegui and José Daniel Simancas, share several similarities. All involve men who fled Venezuela's economic and political crisis and were detained immediately upon entering the United States, though one was later released. Nearly all had tattoos that relatives said aroused the suspicion of U.S. authorities. Families of two of the men said they believed their loved one had been singled out because they were born in the Venezuelan state of Aragua.

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Migrants are lined up before being flown to Guantánamo on Feb. 4. (U.S. Department of Homeland Security)

Tren de Aragua has aroused fears throughout the Americas. But experts in the criminal organization say the group has not established a strong foothold in the United States, where its members probably number only in the hundreds — a small fraction of the nearly 800,000 Venezuelans who live in the country. Three analysts who have studied the gang said tattoos are not linked with membership.

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Three of the six families who spoke with The Post shared documents showing their relatives have no criminal record in Venezuela.

ICE said in a statement that tattoos were “one of many indicators” that an individual belongs to the gang. The agency did not answer a question regarding how many Tren de Aragua members there are among all the Guantánamo detainees. A DHS official did not respond to a request for details on how it identifies who belongs to the gang.

Families in Venezuela described regular calls with loved ones in detention centers before a sudden silence. They checked ICE’s online registry to see an update that their family member was in Florida, with a link to call the detention center — a pattern for those taken to Guantánamo. A WhatsApp group for parents, spouses and siblings of Guantánamo detainees continues to grow.

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In one of their last calls together, Mayfreed Durán, 21, told his father that ICE was claiming he had ties to Tren de Aragua. Michel Durán said his son had been detained since crossing the border in 2023. After a year and a half in detention, Mayfreed told his father, he had agreed to sign deportation papers to return to Venezuela. The Trump administration had reached an agreement with the Venezuelan government to resume flights.

Days later, Durán had not heard from his son. Then he saw his signature tuft of curly hair in a Homeland Security photo. Mayfreed was in Guantánamo.

"I can't live in peace thinking about my little boy living there," Michel Durán said. "It's not right. I know my son is a clean man, that he is not a criminal like they said he was."

A gang from Aragua

Unlike the Latin American crime groups that formed on the streets, Tren de Aragua was born inside one of Venezuela's most infamous penitentiaries in the state of Aragua. Crime bosses within the prison began running kidnapping, drug trafficking and extortion networks from behind bars, while small street gangs outside consolidated and the two began to merge.

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By 2014, Tren de Aragua had grown from a prison-based organization to a national criminal syndicate. In 2017, Venezuela's economic and political collapse sparked a massive exodus of people — and presented the gang with a new and highly profitable opportunity: infiltrating migration routes.

Today, it is an "ethereal, elusive and loose" network primarily involved in migrant trafficking, said Elizabeth Dickinson, a senior analyst at the International Crisis Group think tank. The gang has a foothold in South

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Today, it is an “ethereal, elusive and loose” network primarily involved in migrant trafficking, said Elizabeth Dickinson, a senior analyst at the International Crisis Group think tank. The gang has a foothold in South America, particularly in Peru, Ecuador and Chile, where it profits from smuggling and extortion. It has built its empire in part by preying on those fleeing Venezuela’s crises.

But Ronna Rísquez, an investigative journalist and expert on organized crime in Latin America, said TDA has faced several obstacles in establishing itself in the United States, including a language barrier, competition from stronger criminal organizations and ongoing arrests by law enforcement.

“The U.S. already has well-established mafia structures, cartels and other groups that have been operating here for decades,” she said. “The Tren de Aragua is not going to just take over.”

Nonetheless, Trump seized on the narrative that Tren de Aragua is wreaking havoc to U.S. cities throughout his campaign following several high-profile crimes involving Venezuelan migrants. Multiple studies show Venezuelan migrants are rarely involved in crimes, but those incidents quickly gained widespread attention.

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“The Venezuelan gangs are the worst in the world — they’re vicious, violent people,” Trump said in his first TV network interview after winning the



“The Venezuelan gangs are the worst in the world — they’re vicious, violent people,” Trump said in his first TV network interview after winning the election. “They’re literally taking over apartment complexes and doing it with impunity.”

In recent weeks, ICE has shared images of agents arresting people it describes as TDA members. Noem told Fox News in late January that authorities had arrested a “one of the ringleaders of TDA” who had “just been a part of a gun weapons exchange and was trying to buy grenades.” The secretary also mentioned the gang in explaining why the Trump administration had removed temporary protective status for hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans.

“The people of this country want these dirtbags out,” Noem said.

‘A lie’

In early February, detained migrants began calling family members. They were being transferred, they said. But many didn’t know where, or when, or why.

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Durán called his father. Luis Alberto Castillo called his wife.

“He was very nervous and sad and started to cry,” said Leidy Calle, Castillo’s wife. “I cried, I told him that he should trust God and that he should leave everything in God’s hands.”



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family members spoke to The Post had taken the dangerous journey from Venezuela to the U.S.-Mexico border. They were driven by a desire for a better life, their relatives said, and had goals of opening their own businesses and providing for their families.

One of them was Diuvar Uzcátegui. He grew up in Santa Rita, Aragua — the birthplace of Hector Rusthenford Guerrero Flores, known as “Niño Guerrero,” the Tren de Aragua boss who built the prison gang into a transnational empire.



Luis Alberto Castillo, (Courtesy of Leidy Calle)

By day, the Santa Rita streets filled with the sounds of motorbikes, old men at corner stores sipping malta and children kicking soccer balls. By night, the town changed. Parents told their kids to be home by 9. The wrong kind of people lurked in the shadows — the kind who had turned the city into something else, something dangerous.

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Uzcátegui and his best friend, Kevin, hoped to get out of the town to make something bigger of their lives. Kevin spoke to The Post on the condition of partial anonymity because he is also a Venezuelan immigrant and fears he could be targeted for deportation.

Uzcátegui went first. He initially crossed the border and surrendered to U.S. authorities in October 2023, but he was sent back to Mexico. He tried again in December that year. This time, ICE held him in a detention center for six months and then released him with instructions to check in weekly, then monthly. He applied for asylum and began working long hours in El Paso to send money back to his daughter.

“Hermano, estoy viviendo el sueño americano,” Uzcátegui told Kevin in January. *I'm living the American Dream.*

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“Hermano, estoy viviendo el sueño americano,” Uzcátegui told Kevin in January. *I’m living the American Dream.*

That was the last time Kevin heard from him.



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On Jan. 28, ICE agents showed up at Uzcátegui’s workplace. His girlfriend said the agents told him that he’d missed a check-in. She said he never missed an appointment and thought he’d be quickly released. Instead, a few days later, ICE put out the news that it had arrested three Venezuelan nationals “including two known Tren de Aragua associates.”

One of them was Uzcátegui.

It didn’t make sense, Kevin said. Uzcátegui’s girlfriend didn’t understand it, either. The Post could not locate any records in civil or criminal courts in El Paso with his name. His friends and family wondered if immigration agents had focused on Uzcátegui’s tattoos — one of a panther on his hand, another a red rose on his wrist. Maybe that was enough. Maybe coming from Santa Rita, Aragua, was enough.

“We ran from that life,” Kevin said. “We ran so far. And now they’re saying he’s one of them? That’s a lie.”

A Bible and tattoos

For ICE, tattoos have long been viewed as potential signs of gang affiliation. The practice was applied and criticized during the rise in the United States of MS-13, a gang that more commonly uses tattoos as a form of identification. But the government response also led to arrests in which family members disputed the migrants’ ties to the gang.

Several experts told The Post that the practice is even more concerning when attempting to identify members of Tren de Aragua, which does not even use

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the migrants' ties to the gang.

Several experts told The Post that the practice is even more concerning when attempting to identify members of Tren de Aragua, which does not even use tattoos to signal membership.

Tattoos are also the norm for many Venezuelan youths. Narcoculture — a style where people wear symbols that are sometimes used by gangs — has also become popularized in recent years, said Pablo Zeballos, a Chile-based expert on organized crime.

"Tattoos are greatly meaningless unless they are combined with other factors, like prison history or known criminal associations," he said.

In 2017, ICE put out a statement outlining how it confirmed gang membership: if migrants admitted they were in a gang; if they were convicted of a crime or civil offense for gang-related activity; or if they met "certain other criteria such as having tattoos identifying a specific gang or being identified as a gang member by a reliable source."

Bill Hing, a professor of law and migration studies at the University of San Francisco who has represented migrants accused of gang affiliation, said it "usually doesn't take much more than a tattoo."

"If they [ICE] have some suspicion, then they will take that person into custody. That doesn't mean they will prevail in front of an immigration judge with that allegation," Hing said. "But if that person is undocumented, that person will get deported anyway."

All six of the migrants in this story had tattoos, their family members said. Five of them expressed concerns that their tattoos were what led to the government's suspicion of the migrants' ties to Tren de Aragua.

On Jan. 19, Castillo, his wife and her 9-year-old son showed up for the appointment they had secured through the Biden administration's CBP One app to plead their case to be allowed into the United States.



All six of the migrants in this story had tattoos, their family members said. Five of them expressed concerns that their tattoos were what led to the government's suspicion of the migrants' ties to Tren de Aragua.

On Jan. 19, Castillo, his wife and her 9-year-old son showed up for the appointment they had secured through the Biden administration's CBP One app to plead their case to be allowed into the United States.

Authorities asked the family for their IDs and stamped their fingerprints. Then, officers began asking Castillo about his tattoos, his wife said. He told them he'd gotten them in his youth. After that, she said, they were separated.

"The police officer no longer let him sit next to us," Calle, his wife, said. Castillo had brought a Bible, and she said officers "told him to start praying because he was from the Tren de Aragua. They made fun of him."

He was separated from his wife and child then. They haven't seen him since.

Two weeks later, an image of him appeared in Homeland Security photos touting their first migrant flight to Guantánamo. His head was bent over as he stood on the tarmac, his tattoo of basketball player Michael Jordan visible on his neck.

'American nightmare'

Kevin remembers Uzcátegui as a man whom he'd spent endless afternoons with playing soccer. The friend who turned everything into a joke, who didn't drink and who loved his young daughter "more than anything in the world," Kevin said.

When he saw that his friend was on a list of Guantánamo detainees published by the New York Times, he was in shock.

"I was like, 'Diuvar? A criminal?' I still can't believe it," Kevin said.

He thought back to Uzcátegui's ambitions and his friend's words about his life in Texas: *He was living in the America Dream.*

"American Dream?" Kevin said. "More like American nightmare."

Michel Durán said he similarly can't square the image of his son with that of a hardened Tren de Aragua gang member. He said his son had often criticized his father for drinking beer and smoking.

"He would say 'Ay, papi, that's bad for you,'" he recalled.

Frustrated by Venezuela's



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“He would say ‘Ay, papi, that’s bad for you,’” he recalled.



Diuvár Uzcátegui in El Paso. (Obtained by The Post)

Frustrated by Venezuela’s deteriorating economy, Michel Durán said his son decided to go to the United States, where he hoped he would open a business and send money back to his family.

He attempted to enter the United States twice and was sent back to Mexico both times. After that, he decided to wait for his CBP One appointment.

It was set for July 7, 2023 — two days after his birthday.

“He said this was the best present he could have gotten,” Michel Durán said.

His son was detained in El Paso after arriving for his appointment. A few months later, he was part of a hunger strike, his father said. A criminal complaint of the incident states that Durán approached an officer who was trying to restrain another detainee and that a fight ensued.

Michel Durán said his son told him officers had begun to punch a detainee, and that Mayfreed intervened to try to separate them.

“He pushed one of the police so they would stop hitting him,” the father said, adding that the officer had sprained or fractured an ankle. “He said he didn’t have anything to do with it — he just tried to separate the police so they wouldn’t keep punching him.”

Michel Durán said the Trump administration should investigate “who are the real delinquents, and who aren’t.”

“Why are they sending innocent immigrants to those prisons like they’re animals?” he said. “They’re human beings.”

Ana Herrero reported from Venezuela. Samantha Schmidt, Razzan Nakhlawi and Alice Crites contributed to this report.

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The Washington Post analyzed more than 4.1 million U.S. immigration court records from the past decade to find out where migrants come from and where they live once they arrive in the country.

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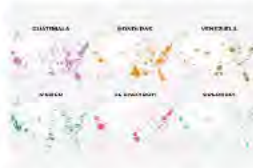
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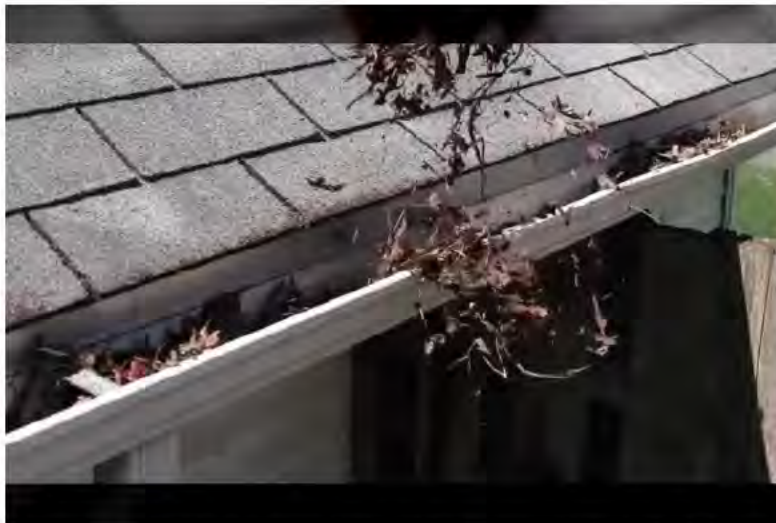
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Trump Calls Some Unauthorized Immigrants ‘Animals’ in Rant

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President Trump at the California Sanctuary State Roundtable in the Cabinet Room on Wednesday. Doug Mills/The New York Times

By Julie Hirschfeld Davis

May 16, 2018

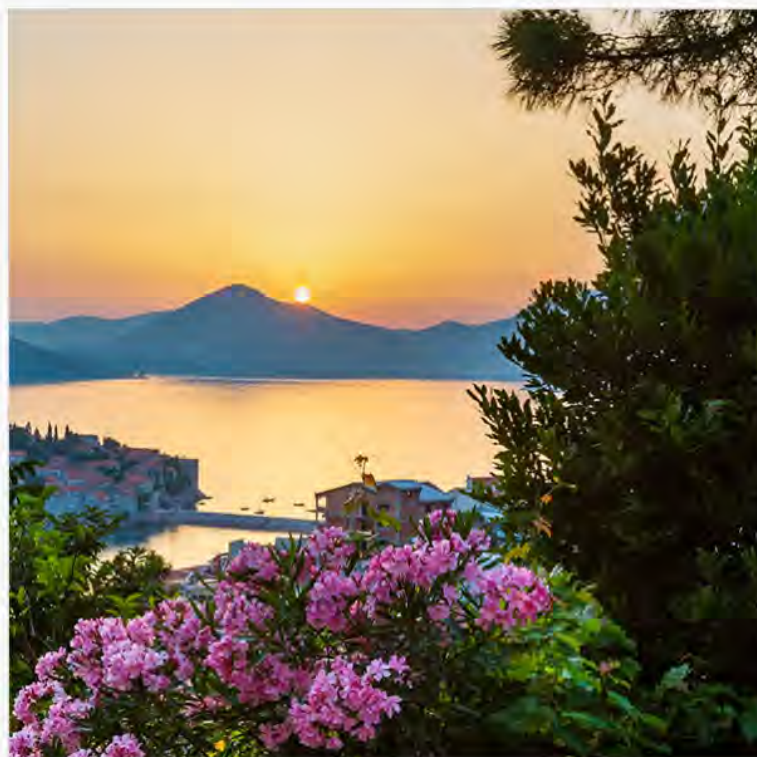
WASHINGTON — President Trump lashed out at undocumented immigrants during a White House meeting on Wednesday, warning in front of news cameras that dangerous people were clamoring to breach the country’s borders and branding such people “animals.”

Mr. Trump’s comments came during a round-table discussion with state and local leaders on California’s so-called sanctuary laws, which strictly limit communication between local law enforcement and federal immigration officers, and which the Trump administration is [suing](#) to invalidate. It was hardly the first time

state and local leaders on California’s so-called sanctuary laws, which strictly limit communication between local law enforcement and federal immigration officers, and which the Trump administration is suing to invalidate. It was hardly the first time the president has spoken in racially fraught terms about immigrants, but it underscored his anger about unchecked immigration — the animating issue of his campaign and his tenure so far — and his frustration that he has not been able to do more to seal the nation’s borders.

As he has in numerous private meetings with his advisers at the White House, Mr. Trump used the session to vent about the nation’s immigration laws, calling them “the dumbest laws on immigration in the world.” He exhorted his administration to “do much better” in keeping out undesirable people, including members of transnational gangs like MS-13.

“We have people coming into the country, or trying to come in — we’re stopping a lot of them,” Mr. Trump said in the Cabinet Room during an hourlong meeting that reporters were allowed to document. “You wouldn’t believe how bad these people are. These aren’t people, these are animals, and we’re taking them out of the country at a level and at a rate that’s never happened before.”



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Mr. Trump’s remarks came as the local officials invited for the event took turns praising his immigration policies and lamenting

Mr. Trump's remarks came as the local officials invited for the event took turns praising his immigration policies and lamenting California's law, arguing that it was making it more difficult for their communities to find and deport criminals.

Sheriff Margaret Mims of Fresno County said the statute barred Immigration and Customs Enforcement authorities from using her databases "to find the bad guys," or from entering prisons to locate people who might be in the country illegally.

"It's really put us in a very bad position," Sheriff Mims said.

"It's a disgrace," Mr. Trump answered, "and we're suing on that."

The president's language and his focus on California drew a sharp rebuke from Jerry Brown, the state's Democratic governor.

"Trump is lying on immigration, lying about crime and lying about the laws of California," Mr. Brown said in a statement. "Flying in a dozen Republican politicians to flatter him and praise his reckless policies changes nothing. We, the citizens of the fifth-largest economy in the world, are not impressed."

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During the session, Mr. Trump suggested that the mayor of Oakland, Calif., should be charged with obstruction of justice for [warning her constituents](#) in February of an impending large-scale immigration raid and arrests.

"You talk about obstruction of justice," said the president, who is himself the subject of a special counsel's investigation into whether he sought to thwart a federal examination of Russia's meddling in the 2016 elections. "I would recommend that you look into obstruction of justice for the mayor of Oakland."

Turning to Jeff Sessions, his attorney general, who sat at the other end of the large wooden conference table, Mr. Trump said: "Perhaps the Department of Justice can look into that."



obstruction of justice for the mayor of Oakland."

Turning to Jeff Sessions, his attorney general, who sat at the other end of the large wooden conference table, Mr. Trump said: “Perhaps the Department of Justice can look into that.”

The round table took place exactly one week after Mr. Trump used a closed-door cabinet meeting to [castigate Kirstjen Nielsen](#), the secretary of homeland security, for failing to do enough to crack down at the border. On Wednesday, Ms. Nielsen said little when called upon to speak, other than to thank Mr. Trump for his leadership on the issue.



"You're doing a good job, and it's not an easy job," Mr. Trump told Ms. Nielsen.

He alluded to a recent push by his administration that [parents be separated from their children](#) when families cross illegally into the United States, but blamed Democrats — many of whom have vehemently opposed the practice — for the new policy.

“I know what you’re going through right now with families is very tough, but those are the bad laws that the Democrats gave us,” Mr. Trump said. “We have to break up families. The Democrats gave us that law.”

The president also took aim at Mexico as unhelpful on immigration.

Trump said. “We have to break up families. The Democrats gave us that law.”

The president also took aim at Mexico as unhelpful on immigration.

“Mexico does nothing for us,” Mr. Trump said. “Mexico talks, but they do nothing for us, especially at the border. Certainly don’t help us much on trade, but especially at the border, they do nothing for us.”

His harsh criticism came as American and Mexican officials were at a critical stage in their efforts to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Trump’s heated remarks on immigration, both private and public, appear to have resonated with his advisers, who have been moving to put in place ever-stricter policies in line with the president’s vision. Mr. Sessions said the Department of Justice would be adding immigration judges and prosecuting twice as many immigration cases this year.



“The president has made clear to all of us that we have to do better,” he said. “We are going to do better.”

The attorney general, a former senator who helped to derail previous attempts at revamping immigration laws, also expressed hope that a legislative overhaul could be enacted this year, although Republicans on Capitol Hill have shown little appetite for undertaking one.

“This is the year that we have to move Congress,” Mr. Sessions said.

A version of this article appears in print on May 17, 2018, Section A, Page 13 of the New York edition with the headline: Trump Rants on Unauthorized Migrants: ‘These Aren’t People, These Are Animals’. [Order Reprints](#) | [Today’s Paper](#) | [Subscribe](#)

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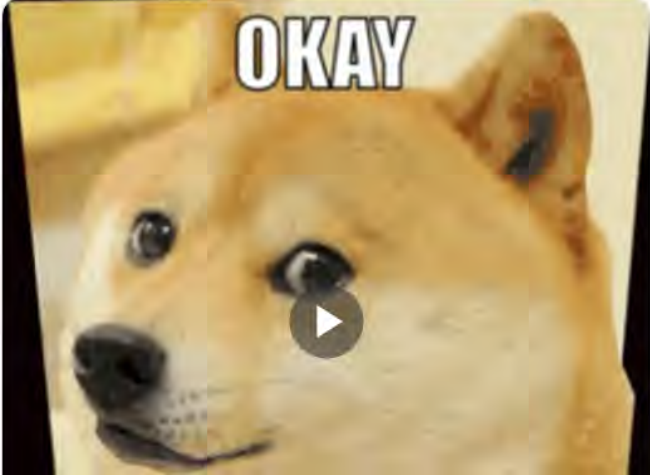
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I love it! It's been time to clean this mess up for a long time now. Hat's off to ICE for putting it all on the line, for us!

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@RealBrianEarl

· Jan 29

That's why you are awesome! 🌞 Keep going!

6

619

Marcelo Nepomuceno Carius

@Carius1976

· Jan 29

Good news!!!

56

Elizabeth C

@AstraA369

· Jan 29

Go get em Sec Noem 🙌

1

4

327

Rock Paper Sizzle

@RPSizzle

· Jan 29

Merica, we're taking it back.

100

You like Trump, you know it, time to show it.

T's for Trump here: rockpapersizzle.shop/collections/trump



 **David Michaels**
@DavidMi47644829

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Secretary Kristi Noem

@Sec_Noem

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The Grok logo, which consists of a stylized 'X' inside a circle, with the word 'GROK' written below it.

Document title: (2) Secretary Kristi Noem on X: "We are ending the ridiculous Biden Administration order that allowed illegal immigrants from Venezuela to stay in...
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Capture timestamp (UTC): Sat, 15 Feb 2025 08:37:25 GMT

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13K

107K

310M
- Tommy Crutti** @TCrutti44926 · Jan 29
👍👍👍🇺🇸🇺🇸🇺🇸

1

2

352
- BoozyCakes** @Cheri0878483882 · Jan 29
Yes, yes, yes! Thank you!!

1

1

156
- CynizenTV** @cynizentv · Jan 29
Kristi Noem is gorgeous. There, I said it. But she is also based and a fantastic addition to the Trump Cabinet.

1

392
- Bonnie** @Bonnie236864374 · Jan 29
THANK YOU !

53
- Chris C** @crza_11 · Jan 29
Thank you for putting Americans first! Make America Safe Again!

7

785
- Njeri** @njeriand · Jan 29
Thank you Kristi

6

606
- King Henians** @KingHenians · Jan 29
🇺🇸👍👍

97
- theDevilKnOwsNADA** @kno_nada · Jan 29
🙏

1

122
- Flying fast** @Flyingfast80228 · Jan 29
Thank you.

99

David Michaels @DavidMi47644829 ...

Matthew White @MatthewWhi17466 · Jan 29
If he was putting our safety first then pardoning people who stormed the capital and phvsically injured police was the white

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97

**theDevilKnOwsNADA** @kno_nada · Jan 29

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122

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Thank you.



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- Matthew White** @MatthewWhi17466 · Jan 29
If he was putting our safety first then pardoning people who stormed the capital and physically injured police was the white direction? I see you bitch.
- HalParker77** @HalParker77 · Jan 29
keep up the good work!
- Rock Paper Sizzle** @RPSizzle
Put America First!
We have the best chance with Trump & Vance.
- Wear it Proudly here: rockpapersizzle.shop/pages/trump-to-...



- MAGA Mark** @MarkRWarren2 · Jan 29
- CT** @LeadAgentCT · Jan 29
Thank you!
- Andrea Reinoso** @AndreaReinoso4 · Jan 29
I would like to interview you.
- Juan Carlos** @JuanCarlos51850 · Jan 29
With all respect, must of those Venezuelan with TPS came to US legally and there are not violating any laws. To extend or not the TPS is President Trump's decision and is ok, but please, do not treat all Venezuelan as criminals because we are not.
- Larry hendrick** @LarryHendrick · Jan 29

David Michaels @DavidMi47644829

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may be more likely to participate in political activities, including seeking leadership roles. This could be driven by a desire for power, influence, and recognition.



- Mirelle** @mirelle_bel · Jan 29
The majority of Venezuelans are not criminals and deserve to have security and be treated with dignity. Venezuela is living under a dictatorship! Honest and hardworking people are being affected.

1

62

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62
- Mirelle** @mirelle_bel · Jan 29
The majority of Venezuelans are not criminals and deserve to have security and be treated with dignity. Venezuela is living under a dictatorship! Honest and hardworking people are being affected. Please, help them!

1

279

9

279
- Mirelle** @mirelle_bel · Jan 29
The majority of Venezuelans are not criminals and deserve to have security and be treated with dignity. Venezuela is living under a dictatorship.. help them, please!!!

1

192

5

192
- Mirelle** @mirelle_bel · Jan 29
The majority of Venezuelans are not criminals and to have security and be treated with dignity. Venezuela is living under a dictatorship! Honest and hardworking people are being affected!!

1

134

4

134
- Mirelle** @mirelle_bel · Jan 29
The majority of Venezuelans are not criminals and deserve to have security and be treated with dignity. Venezuela is living under a dictatorship! Thousands of Honest and hardworking people are being affected..

1

162

4

162

S

Stephen Lopez @lop41149 · Jan 29

David Michaels
@DavidMi47644829

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Ger @GeraldtheWriter · Jan 29
Yay!

202

Harry TheEagle @Harry_TheEagle · Jan 29
You have my full support. Secure the border, deport illegals. It is the right thing to do for American citizens.

1 160

Dave Petty @DpdriilerPetty · Jan 29

50

Kevin M Fenaughty @Fenaughty_KM · Jan 29
Why is that a difficult concept to understand !

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- Kevin M Fenaughty** @Fenaughty_KM · Jan 29
Why is that a difficult concept to understand !
46
- George** @George853578121 · Jan 29
Sec'y Noem, What a refreshing array of sunshine you are bringing to this critical job. America is overjoyed with your selection of head of DHS.
3
- Jim** @moonwalkercapt · Jan 29
🇺🇸 🇺🇸 🇺🇸
42
- moron city, usa** @Kmoneytypebeat · Jan 29
How many dogs have you shot so far
29
- Daniel Montesdeoca** @alexroamin26 · Jan 29
Excelente que gran trabajo 🍷🍷🍷🍷
34
- László** @Lszl993129273 · Jan 29
😊❤️
35
- Paul shockley** @Paulshock115236 · Jan 29
Well done! ❤️
35

Mammoth Nation 🇺🇸 @MammothNationUS
President Trump is saving our country by deporting dangerous criminal illegal immigrants.

Put America First by joining Mammoth Nation TODAY.



From mammothnation.com

18 44 369 84K

David Michaels @DavidMi47644829

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consequences are the violent illegal

From mammothnation.com

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DANNY TRAN (ALPHA-MALE)-(ULTR...

@MRD... · Jan 29

CONGRATULATIONS TO MRS. KRISTI NOEM FOR SECRETARY OF DHS!

125



Brian Basson

@BassonBrain · Jan 29

Yup, legal immigration or deportation. Next up, the Deep State and all the traitors in Govt incl. Congress, and we know who they are...

2 155




Ron Nelson

@golfnrcrazy · Jan 29

Outstanding job Kristi!! America first.

32



Ryan

@RyanMorganx10 · Jan 29

Great job, Secretary Noem.

146




Lisa Maria

@lisamaria728 · Jan 29

I hate that dog killer.

12



Misttina Brownfield

@MisttinaBr24043 · Jan 29

Thank you!

102




Don'tBeAJagoff

@Eporine1973 · Jan 30

What about all the Haitians with TPS?

68




Wayne Gately

@GatelyWayne · Jan 30

👍👍👍🇺🇸🇺🇸🇺🇸

15




h nelson

@hln36 · Jan 30

Thank you

25



May

@marylou_wm · Jan 29

You are the dirtbag on the streets. Piece of shit.

3




Mark Magnani

@magnani_ma86516 · Jan 29

Homeland secretary Kristie Noem is great job very hard work.

6




Saint Chris Benoit

@bobo_rex90235 · Jan 29

someone to do the same thing to you as what you did to that dog. bitch

14




BellatorLuciusK

@BellatorLucius · Jan 29

Not all Venezuelans are criminals!! Trump should be prosecuting Maduro not the people of Venezuela, is insane what are you doing!!

20

Relevant people



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1

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Thank you!

102

Don't Be A Jagoff @Eponine1973 · Jan 30

What about all the Haitians with TPS?

2000 dropped in my hometown, Charleroi, PA

1

68

Wayne Gately @GatelyWayne · Jan 30

👍👍👍🇺🇸🇺🇸🇺🇸

15

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20
- lilpixies

@lilpixies · Jan 29

Thank you!!!

3
- Tiago

@Tiago1672308 · Jan 29

It is nice to be part of the deportation activities as this was what we voted for in November. Thank you and Mr. Homan for keeping us informed 🙌

28
- Mammoth Nation

📍 @MammothNationUS

Joe Biden said the quiet part out loud: they want to lock Trump up and throw away the key.

Ad



From mammothnation.com

4.2K 14K 50K 30M

- Rick Berry

@RickBerry172828 · Jan 30

You go Kristi ❤️

1
- Pink Slice

@pinkslice117 · Jan 30

I thought u were putting zionists first And first ammendment down the list

21
- Steve Chappell

@Steve_Chappell · Jan 30

Thank you @Sec_Noem ! 🇺🇸

42
- Sheryl Gruber

@GruberSher29210 · Jan 30

Anyone who knew about the ngos paying for people to come through Mexico should be tried for treason

21

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@DavidMi47644829

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**Sheryl Gruber** @GruberSher29210 · Jan 30

Anyone who knew about the ngos paying for people to come through Mexico should be tried for treason

21

**bbruiz** @lucant19 · Jan 30



16

**Trump2024Film**  @Trump2024Film Ad

There's only one way to fight back against the Marxists, Socialists, Globalists, and Communists ruining our country...



From trump2024.film

23K

62K

30M

**SmileyForCongress** @Smiley4Congress · Jan 30

Your capture/deportation of violent illegal aliens combined with passage of the Laken Riley Act today will go a long way to Make America Safe Again [#RestoreAmerica](#)

14

**Freedom Speaker** @Tad533504761134 · Jan 30

Secretary Noem will do a fantastic job for Americans. Great job reversing Mayorkus ignorant rule.

7

**tbann41** @tbann41 · Jan 30

THANK YOU!!!!

7

**PatriotConservativeJew** @PatriotJew44861 · Jan 30

They've been set up for years in Mexico, Central, and South America using OUR tax dollars to assist them coming here with everything from instructions & TV ads, to legal aid... go after them.

**David Michaels** @DavidMi47644829

It's treason.

5

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@Sec_Noem

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It's treason.

5

1

1

1

1

Paul Foster @foster_pau96606 · Jan 30

Yes

19

1

1

1

Ryan Wright @2024wrightryan · Jan 30

Buffalo Ridge, YUUP!

13

1

1

1

Rengomz @Rengomz1613361 · Jan 30

I was praying for this that the day will come when America comes back from the ashes by the biden's administration, lo and behold Trump won, and he brought in talent and real deal. @Sec_Noem God bless you!!

66

1

1

1

Stephen Ballard @SteveoDaddio · Jan 30

This is what real America looks like. Americans First!!

7

1

1

1

Gary Castropoda @GCastropoda · Jan 31

You said ridiculous when you really meant treasonous. It's obviously both things. Just wanted to say what needs be said.

2

1

1

1

Chupapi Bichotazo @BichotazoPapi · Feb 2

Not all immigrants are illegal. Not all immigrants are criminals. There is no black and white here, but a ton of gray.

8

1

1

1

Clarice Harkins Blaylock, CPhT -... @BlaylockCl... · Jan 29

This is the best NEWS! Venusalan illegal aliens broke into the US, and have brought criminal destruction to our country and people! Venusalan TPS rightfully needs to be and should be removed! ALL DEPORTED!👏👏👏🇺🇸

71

1

1

1

Financial prepper @Financialprepr · Jan 29

Keeping America safe!! It's crazy we even have to have this discussion and orders... should be a known fact!

540

1

1

1

Rarely Tolerable. @RarelyTolerated

Do you support Trumps deportation policies?

Yes

No

6,360 votes · 1 day left

21

76

143

26K

1

1

Michelle Orama @OramaOrama · Jan 29

Not every Venezuelan in US is a criminal. Many here work legally with visas & extended TPS & pay TAXES. Many waiting for citizenship but red tape and bureaucracy have stalled their efforts. Careful evaluation of each individual should be taken before deportation

1

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Capture timestamp (UTC): Sat, 15 Feb 2025 08:37:25 GMT

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Link : teezily.com/stores/fmmgld1...
🔥 Can't stop laughing every time! #CoolTee

🗨️

🔄

👍 1

📊 834

🔖

📤

Luke Irvine @Lukelrvine0704 · Jan 29

❌ ...

Please don't let democrats turn Orange County, CA into a sanctuary county (it already is); Huntington Beach, CA declared itself a non-sanctuary city; all cities must follow suit; resources must prioritize locals; small and big companies must offer jobs to locals first. Thanks.

🗨️

🔄

👍 3

📊 161

🔖

📤

KI888 @LeslieKat81229 · Feb 2

❌ ...

🌞🌈🌻🌺🎵

🗨️

🔄

👍

📊 3

🔖

📤

हिन्दु राष्ट्रम् भारतम्™ @HinduNation_ · Jan 29

❌ ...

🚩🇮🇳

Illegal intruders sneak in through illegal means because their image is not good in their country or they could be criminals or terrorists or anything else, they should be released only after investigation

🗨️

🔄

👍

📊 40

🔖

📤

Chuckyfamous! @Nem_Famous · Jan 29

❌ ...

Thank you Kristi keep up the good work

🗨️ 3

🔄

👍 13

📊 1.2K

🔖

📤

Royce @Royceusa1 · Jan 29

❌ ...

Ice ice baby.

🗨️

🔄

👍

📊 176

🔖

📤

Ryan Voels @ryan_voels · Jan 29

❌ ...

I feel like I just woke up and everything is back to normal again...

🗨️

🔄

👍 1

📊 125

🔖

📤

CamiloTorresVillamil @cetvillamil · Jan 29

❌ ...

Secretary @Sec_Noem Remember this: DO NOT harm the Communities by arresting families who work, help in their neighborhoods, in their Churches and their neighbors, and also pay taxes and are respectful of the Law even if they do not yet have Residence Permits in the USA🇺🇸. It is

🗨️

🔄

👍

📊

🔖

📤

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...

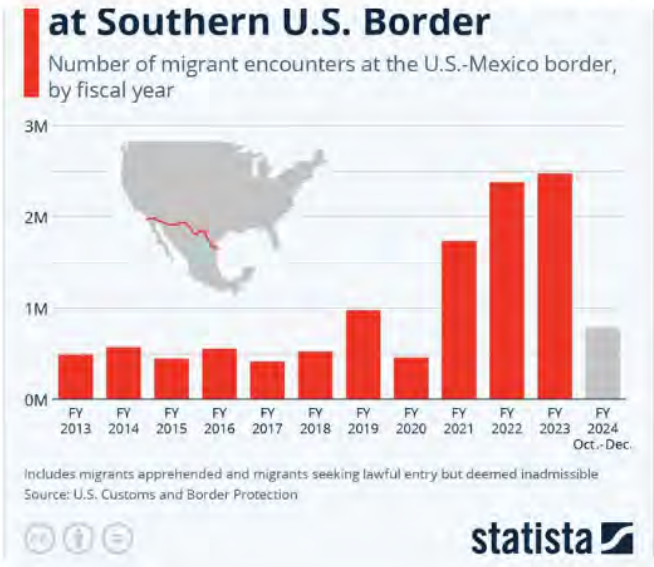
Migrant Encounters Rise at Southern U.S. Border

Number of migrant encounters at the U.S.-Mexico border, by fiscal year

3M

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V Kaye @kaykando · Jan 29
Thank you Sec. Noem

Comment Retweet Like 2 147

JoZiah @JoZiah76 · Jan 29
Just continue to round up this scum and deport their asses

Comment Retweet Like 102

Alfredo Mousset @AlfredoMousset · Jan 29
Please reconsider many cases of Venezuelans that are here with TPS and are working, studying, with new families of their own, and with many goals in this great country.

Comment Retweet Like 6 173

MICKEY MICKEY @miroiz · Jan 29
I'm from Venezuela, congrats on your good job. I hope only criminals get throw out, most people from Venezuela are doing things right. I'm on the same page as you about that you must clean up your country.

Comment Retweet Like 2 99

S.A. Dupres @Susan_Dupres · Jan 29
Yes!

Comment Retweet Like 171

Vance Ginn @VanceGinn
Dive into the critical issues shaping economic policy, from President-elect Trump's sweeping tariff proposals to the challenges Texas faces under rising government spending.

Now is the time for bold reforms to protect taxpayers and ensure economic freedom thrives.



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Julio @jb050705 · Jan 29



66



Samurai da Acupuntura @alexvetyahoo · Jan 29

125



Drake @xTheEndX · Jan 30

11



Lena*vote blue*NO LIST... @LenaP497... · Jan 30

And because that "administration" is putting our safety first, that demented convicted felon put about 1600 violent criminals back on the street.
Btw, non-documented immigrants committ much less crimes as that orange thing in the WG.

4



Glen @sauerkraut145 · Jan 29

41



PawHero @jasonso31668030 · Jan 29

41



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Keep up the good work Kristi! We support you 100%!
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- PawHero** @jasonso31668030 · Jan 29
The dog killer
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- Julie Goff** @Go25663820 · Jan 30
#dog ki//er 🐕🐕
14
- aaliyah** @aaliyih · Jan 29
Where's your puppy?
15
- Bruce Helmer** @HelmerBruce · Jan 30
Go secretary, Noem. Winning. Can you believe how many people want you to fail? Shit, is Shit .
10
- Dieter Lubig** @LubigDieter · Jan 30
👍👍
8
- Mammoth Nation** 🇺🇸 @MammothNationUS Ad
"In the end they're not coming after me, they're coming after you. I'm just standing in the way."
Stand with Trump and America First Republicans by joining Mammoth Nation TODAY.



From mammothnation.com

- 3.2K 14K 54K 17M
- Riot05** @Stevan16842831 · Jan 30
Chicago soon?
18
- Lytle G. Warren.** 🇺🇸 @lytle_warren · Jan 29
!!!!!! ❤️❤️❤️❤️
147
- Robert McLean** 🇺🇸 @RU... · Jan 29
Abajo la Tiranía C...
Excuse me, I am Venezuelan under TPS, I have 2 master's degrees, I work as a professional for a local government and also I have a small business. I pay my taxes, zero felonies and zero Federal aids. Why on earth you say I am violating US laws? Please explain.
1 10 122

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Keith J. @BlackMagic63 · Jan 30
America stands with you and @POTUS Madam Secretary!

P. Ness @McGooGa · Jan 29
Fuck you.

Randy1Correia @AugustCorreia · Jan 30
Thank you 🇺🇸❤️🕊️

Jim Dall @dall_jim · Jan 30
Did you run that past corey first?

Bills Queen @bflony123 · Jan 29
Last week in a town of approximately 35,000 people my son got accosted by a woman and her daughter well-dressed from Venezuela they were begging him for money. Luckily for her he spoke Spanish and didn't mince words and told her no. This is like the third or fourth time

Pete Van @KyPeterVan22 · Jan 29
Great work in such a short time, on top of that, you definitely stood out.

Vance Ginn @VanceGinn
While nothing exonerates the murder of CEO Brian Thompson, public outrage at our healthcare system is in many ways justified.

by DEANE WALDMAN, M.D. AND VANCE GINN December 21, 2024, 10:20 PM

Rage Against the (Healthcare) Machine

From substack.com

Rollin @Leatherneck1978 · Jan 29
Thank you ma'am!

StandFor @StandAdk · Jan 29
These cities have been held hostage by gangs—ruining cities

DSKovatch @DogsBreakfastAZ · Jan 30
That is quite a hairpiece.

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From amazon.com

11 8 103 154K

- Miss Mary

@DivintyMary · Jan 29

America First

1 37
- Bill Mathis

@BillandTerryMat · Jan 29

She's 100 Million times better than Mayorkas!

7 390
- YachatsSteve

@stevepaul59 · Jan 29

Show your proof Hypocrisy Hussy.

19

Crusaders = Christian
Inquisitors = Christian
Nazis = Christian
KKK = Christian
Maga = Christian

There seems to be a pattern here

- Honest Citizen

@catso_grande · Jan 29

You're off to a great start! Thank you for standing up for Us, the American people!

8
- Art Busch

@buscharte7 · Jan 29



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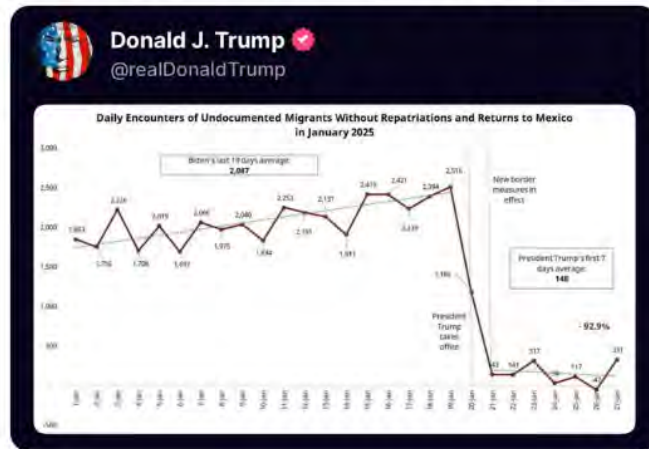
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Violet A Golden @teloivenna · Jan 29
Congratulations Madame Secretary! We support you and pray for you as you carry out your sworn duty to keep America safe and to rid us of the illegal scum who have infested our beautiful nation for far too long. God Bless and Protect you and we have your back Madame Secretary.

\$8 Bartemy @BartemyS · Jan 29
Biden/Harris and the Dems let in millions of unvetted illegal aliens into the United States.

This included tens and tens of thousands of convicted violent criminals.

Biden/ Harris and the Democrats broke it...Trump is fixing it!!



Cajunsupport @cajunsupport · Jan 29
Well done 🌞

VK @vjeannek · Jan 29

AND WE SAY BYE BYE

Guantanamo is open @Gracesodapop · Jan 29
Smithfield is full of Chinese illegals who are criminals!!! Arrest and deport

Sasquatch @Sasquatch2 · Jan 29
Thank you!!!!!!

David Michaels @DavidMi47644829

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